PRACTICAL SALESMANSHIP

Demonstration Method

The
Pre-Approach
Volume VI

NATIONAL SALESMEN'S TRAINING ASSOCIATION
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SECTION I

THE RIGHT MENTAL ATTITUDE

THE RIGHT MENTAL ATTITUDE

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Competition Is a Fixed Fact.
A Disturbing Factor.
How to Deal With Competition.

ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE SALE

The Test of Your Preparation.
The Prospect the Beneficiary.
The Positive Attitude. Belief in Yourself.

SECTION I

THE RIGHT MENTAL ATTITUDE

THE wide range of human needs set forth by the preceding volume now furnishes the salesman one of the most important considerations in making his pre-approach. Without an intelligent understanding of those needs he will not be able to meet them.

Preparatory to the actual dealing with the customer there are many things to analyze in connection with the pre-approach, the first of which are these needs without which salesmanship would have no occasion to function. The salesman's problem is how to adapt his proposition to the needs he claims it will supply.

The simplest analysis of these relations should indicate that before one can do any selling he must know why the prospect would have any interest in buying. That "interest" must arise from an existing need, which is the only reason for the output of the product.

Here then is the starting point for the pre-approach—an understanding of the proposition in terms of the need it is calculated to satisfy.

While the pre-approach occurs before the actual meeting of the customer and the salesman, it prepares the latter for doing both. What is done in preparing for the sale is repeated in making the sale. You have simply thought out your course of action and the thinking becomes the doing.

The pre-approach is preparatory and enters essentially into what follows. The foundation is a part of the house, and it is not any less so because it is not a living room.

Getting an education is a preparatory procedure, but it becomes an integral part of the business of life for which it was obtained. It plays an actual part in all of those affairs.

In like manner the pre-approach is an essential part of the selling. It is thinking before doing, but there would not be much intelligent doing aside from such thinking.

You have not as yet actually come to the prospect, but in a very essential sense you have been doing that very thing. You have not as yet presented your proposition, but when you do you will be repeating what has been thought out.

Unless the game is played before the team comes to the diamond there will not be much of a game. Unless the salesman can fit his proposition to the needs of the prospect before he interviews him the selling will be a lame affair.

What is true of the foundation of the house and of an education is true of the pre-approach—it is essentially a part of the selling process. It is incidental that the salesman has not as yet come to the prospect. Making the sale is simply the opportunity of applying the pre-approach.

This discussion of the subject embraces first of all the mental attitude of the salesman, and then the planning of the sale relative to the goods and the customer. It rests upon the general maxim, "Plan your work and then work the plan."

There are several things to be said about the right mental attitude.

NATURE AND NEED OF THE RIGHT ATTITUDE

Emphasis is laid on the word "right." Every salesman has some sort of an attitude. It may be that of interest or

indifference; he may be concerned or careless. Everything depends upon his attitude being right.

A Constructive Attitude

A constructive mental attitude thinks in terms of the largest possible gains and what is necessary in order to secure them. There is an attitude that builds up and one that pulls down. We sometimes speak of these as positive and negative. The word "constructive" expresses more clearly the sense.

In taking this attitude the mind is engaged in a building process for high ends. It has ideals to be realized. It thinks in large figures and large achievements. It has a business structure to rear and must know the right materials for such a structure. This is constructive thinking.

Confidence, for example, is constructive; doubt is destructive. The one is a business builder, the other has a deadening effect and saps the energies and ambition. The one has a star of hope, the other digs a grave for aspiration.

Constructive thinking furnishes the mind with useful knowledge to be employed in one's tasks. We do not rise higher than our thoughts any more than the stream can rise above its source. "As a man thinketh, so is he." You cannot put more than what you are into what you do. What you are includes what you have acquired. If your mind is unfurnished it is like so much empty space. It will not remain empty long, but will soon have tenants of a destructive and negative order.

Destructive attitudes do not seek for constructive knowledge. They are the doubts that assail you and emphasize everything that is wrong about yourself. If you have a mole of defection, they will raise it to a mountain of inability. They dry up the streams of your ambition.

On the other hand, if your thinking is surcharged with confidence, faith, and high purposes, such ideals will embody themselves in positive activities that compel success.

This is the nature of the right mental attitude. It gives you a vision of your sphere of activity, and inspires you with the noble purpose of making the most of your life.

Essential to Success

You must think yourself into success before you actually achieve it. Napoleon had a mental picture of his empire long before he won his victories in Egypt, at Wagram, Austerlitz and Jena. If your success is not a fact in your pre-approach, it is not likely to be in the actual selling.

If you think in small figures you will be satisfied with such and not strive for greater things. If you think in large figures you will go after big business.

Here are two classes of people—which class do you represent? What you represent is your particular order of thinking. Every one does the same. What you think to-day you will do tomorrow. S u c c e s s not conceived is not achieved.

Good fortune is not to be confused with success. A fortune might come to you that another earned. You may never have done enough constructive thinking to be able to use it wisely. Instead of a fortune it may be the most unfortunate thing that ever happened to you.

Success is the offspring of action, the child of the right mental attitude. It comes by regular generation. It is no surprise to him who achieves it; he has been thinking about it, planning it. It causes less wonderment on his part than on the part of those who behold and admire it.

It has come to him by steady progression. He remembers the hours of constructive thinking and preparation he employed to turn his ideal into the real. What would have caused him to wonder would be if he did not gain his objective, not that he had succeeded; he worked for and expected that.

Your success was assured when, in a right attitude of mind, you grasped the end you determined to reach, and had the ability, perseverance, and courage to work to that point. You had to think about it before you could go after it. Every great thing in this world first took the form of a thought. To that thought was added another, then a well-defined purpose, and so it grew and matured into action.

There is no royal road to success. You do not inherit it; it must be achieved. It does not drop into your hand from the skies; it is the out-working of great energies that come to life in reflection.

If you want success you must think it, nourish it, plan it. The price of it may be the reconstruction of your life, your habits, your vital forces. Are you willing to pay the price?

Thus we see the nature and need of the right mental attitude, what is meant by constructive thinking, and how it is the basis of success.

ATTITUDE TOWARDS YOURSELF

The place to begin constructive thinking is with yourself. This is what you have first to work on and to work over. A clear understanding with yourself is your most important concern. In selling we try to bring our prospects to the point of desire and decision. For the time being you are the prospect, and you must sell yourself on certain fundamental things. You will never show better

salesmanship than in the manner in which you will sell yourself the things that are indispensable to a successful career.

Things Expected

People usually find what they are looking for. When you think of meeting the prospect what is the dominant thing, the fear of not selling him or confidence and enthusiasm in closing the deal? What do you expect of yourself? This is, just now, a more important fact than what you expect of the prospect.

If you see yourself being turned down it will predispose you to failure—you expect it. Influenced by that negative feeling you would not have one chance in ten of closing that deal. You were whipped before you began. In your thinking you lost the sale before you began the selling, and that fact will cling to you and handicap you when dealing with the prospect.

On the other hand, you come to the prospect with assurance. You believe in yourself and your proposition. You have confidence in your ability to present the goods and you believe you will close the deal. Under the influence of these positive attitudes you will go into the sale with enthusiasm. The prospect will catch the infection of it and will yield to the appeals. You won the sale before you began to sell—you expected to win.

Things to Remember

When you are assailed by misgivings and are afraid of yourself, you will call to mind the things you have done that required ability and courage. You did them and did them well. These achievements prove to you that you

are not a weakling. They stand out in memory and are a challenge to fear.

Forget that you ever failed; remember your successes. You say, what has been done can be done again, and I did it once. The memory of a past accomplishment will come to your rescue and deliver you from fear that unnerves and distracts you.

Analyze those former acts and see why it was you succeeded, and what was necessary on your part in order to succeed. You will realize what qualities you possess that enabled you to do those things. You still have them and they can be employed again. They were tested and not found wanting, and these recollections set you before yourself as having the elements of success, and not as a failure.

You will remind yourself that others whom you know have succeeded whose abilities do not exceed your own. In this comparison you are honest with yourself; you compel yourself to admit that there is not good reason why you should not succeed as well as they. Here is your friend Bill who has made a great success. You expected him to succeed but feel differently toward yourself. You are as good a man as he; you have abilities equally good and are just as industrious.

Remind yourself of these facts. Call up the battles you have fought and won; see yourself before the prospect abundantly equal to the occasion and succeeding as you have done before.

Physical and Mental Fitness

A sane mind in a sound body is the combination your work requires. You need to be a well man when you come to your prospect. A good physical condition puts the force of perfect health into your work. A sick man, a dyspeptic,

or a physical weakling cannot put the right energy into the talk that is to carry weight and conviction.

Physical disorders cause you to work under disadvantages. They keep your mind on them; they will get into your blood and keep you in a brooding state. They will give you the blues and make you morose. They will cause you to magnify little trifles into insurmountable obstacles.

These ills began with the body and then became mental ailings. You will imagine yourself worse than you are. Most of these things can be corrected without the use of medicine. The medicine keeps you in mind of the fact that you are a sick man, and that is the very thing you must get out of your mind. A lot of it is in your mind and not in your body.

Be your own doctor. Prescribe for yourself those simple things that make for health and vigor. When in the dumps don't sit in your room and brood over it. Take a brisk walk, get your blood into circulation, forget yourself and see the beauty and glory of things about you.

In all things cultivate regularity. Get the required amount of sleep and get up in good time. Be regular with your meals. Study your diet and the amount you eat. More people die from over-feeding than from starvation.

All of these things will contribute to mental fitness. The mind affects the body and, in turn, the state of the body affects the mind. Appear before your prospect in the best of health and with your mental forces in proper trim. If you are in poor condition because of bad habits, break them up, or they will break you up. Go into the fight with a manhood, physical and mental, that radiates health, vigor, strength, steadiness, and balance, and you will create a favorable impression from the start.

Tone and Enunciation

Don't leave it to the time of the sale to reform bad habits.

Talking is a fundamental element in your work. You turn it into dollars and cents. If your tones are disagreeable, your speech halting, or your enunciation such that you cannot be understood, there will be more boredom than brilliancy about your sales talk.

It is possible to cultivate a pleasing tone and modulation. Break up the bad habit of indistinct utterance. Do not talk in such subdued tones that you give the impression that you are condescending to talk at all. The prospect will not listen long to the salesman who compels him to strain his hearing to know what he is saying.

People are inclined to associate the salesman with his proposition. If he distresses the prospect there is small chance of the proposition repairing the damage no matter how good it may be.

You can be straightforward without being gruff, emphatic without being dictatorial, courteous without being patronizing. There is a tone of voice that is commanding but not imperious. It carries conviction and finality. There is a tone that possesses no character. It lacks the quality that compels attention. It carries no conviction. It is incapable of expressing the greatness of the proposition.

The explosive talker is just as irritating as the one who mumbles his words. The fellow who talks as if he were about to miss the train is as ineffective as he who travels by a stage coach.

Place yourself under training for tone, speed, force, modulation, enunciation. It is very desirable that you have a good vocabulary, but it is equally important that you give

it the proper expression. Develop the positive mode of speech.

How to Lay the Ghost of Fear

Fear is one of the most unsettling things in the young salesman's life. There is nothing he should fear so much as fear.

What is it he fears? Not the proposition, because he believes in it. Not the prospect as an individual, because he could meet him on any other plane without the slightest apprehension or annoyance.

He fears himself.

This fear feeds on a growing self-consciousness. He is too conscious of himself. To lay this ghost of fear is to get his mind off himself.

You fear the ordeal of asking the prospect to buy something. There is nothing that will help you to get rid of this so successfully as to become absorbed in the values of the proposition. This will get *you* out of the center of the stage and enable you to stage your goods. Consider what a benefit you are conferring upon the buyer. You are bringing him great values which it would be a loss for him not to purchase. In that attitude of mind you will not be thinking of the loss to you if he does not buy, but of the loss to him.

Be energized by the thought of the service you are rendering, and this transference of thought from yourself to your goods and the needs of the prospect will soon dissipate fear.

All salesmen have passed through this experience. It has been so strong and persistent in some cases as to drive them out of salesmanship before they got well started. It has stepped in the way of a very successful career. This is

all the more pitiable because it is a form of cowardice. The most disconcerting of all fears is the fear of one's self.

Buck up; get a firm hand on yourself. Most of your fears are nothing but distorted imaginings. Go after them with a club and don't let them down you. Be the captain of your soul and give yourself orders that must be obeyed.

Although all salesmen pass through this experience, it is a comforting fact that it soon wears off. But it can be made to vanish more quickly if, in the pre-approach, you take yourself in hand, analyze the thing and say, "This fear is a ghost, and I have always declared I did not believe in ghosts and that no ghost could scare me."

Enthusiasm grows with each sale you make, practice makes perfect, and the first thing you know this ghost has turned his back on you and walked out of your life.

Measure of Ability

Do not delude yourself by over-estimation or under-estimation. Self-depreciation is just as vicious as over-estimating yourself and claiming for yourself qualities or virtues that you do not possess.

Appreciate your own value and worth as a man. Have a proper self-respect in all that word implies. A man amounts to no more than he thinks he is. He will never rise above the level of his own estimation. It is just as essential that you know all that you really are as to realize the things in which you are deficient.

There are two ways of measuring yourself: One is to stand beside a dwarf and see how tall you are; the other is to put your five feet beside the six-footer and see how short you are. In both cases it is a matter of comparison.

It is a bad thing to be associated all the time with dwarfs; you are likely to over-estimate yourself.

Measure your ability by your task. What does it require; how much can you bring to it? If it is bigger than you, grow up to its demands. It will make you a larger and better man. Seek the things that demand more than you possess, not the things that lie below your present mental stature. The one will raise you by reaching up, the other will make you a mental hunchback by reaching down.

A thing is large or small by comparison. If it exceeds your ability it will appear large to you, but it does not appear that way to the man who is equal to it. But it looked that way to him when he was your size in point of ability and until he grew up to it and matched its requirements.

What are your shortcomings as measured by your task? This is an important question of your pre-approach. Measure yourself every day by this rule and watch your progress. Lay aside such a task because you do not measure up to it, and you will take a step backwards and drop in your own estimation.

Get your exact measure; appreciate your own value and worth as a man. Come to your prospect as such and not in an apologetic attitude. You are not necessarily short or undersized because another man is tall. Do not minimize your actual measure by comparison. If you are bringing to your prospect a five-foot-eight-inch ability, don't appear before him as a four-foot man. Stand your full height.

These are some of the things to consider in your right mental attitude to yourself.

ATTITUDE TOWARDS YOUR HOUSE

For the time being you are a part of the house. You are contributing to its success or increasing its problems. Are you an asset or a liability?

Your house is not perfect; it does not claim to be. It is composed of human beings who are liable to make mistakes. Its salesmen are not perfect. It is handicapped by their deficiencies.

Your house is doing business, however, and probably doing it well. It is doing it on its strength and not on its weakness. Ability is at work.

Its Purpose

Realize that your house has a useful product, good enough to attract you to it and inspire the desire to sell it. It is bringing something to the public that meets a need. Its aim is to supply this demand and in doing so to render a service. It takes just pride in adding to the sum total of values.

Dominated by this interest, it is striving to bring its enterprise to practical perfection. It is because of this purpose, this spirit and zeal, that it is what it is. Its strength is greater than its weakness, and everything about it that is good and the success it has attained are expressions of that strength.

Your house has had no easier time in building up its business, getting a foothold and overcoming obstacles, than has any other establishment. It has had to weather the storms of criticism and brace itself against the force of competition that would drive it to the wall. It has succeeded and now has the confidence and support of its patrons.

The salesman, as is true of others, is inclined to think of his house as it is. He does not go back to the early days of its beginning when it was fighting its first battles and struggling for existence. There was a time when its success was problematic, when its assets just balanced its liabilities. Keep these things in mind when you think of your house. It will then appear to you as a truly strong man waging a bitter fight against odds and winning the victory. Any man with any red blood in him admires a winner in that kind of fight. Estimate your house in terms of its splendid purpose.

Its Policies

Consider the fact that the house aims to render its patrons a true service. It must deal with them on the basis of strict honesty. It endeavors to give them value for value in the exchange of values. It wants to treat its patrons as partners who have just claims on the business. It strives to serve them honestly and well with the quality of its goods and with its promptness of delivery.

Another thing to take into account is the many ways in which it seeks to serve you, the salesman. It has carried you along and invested money in you in the weak days of your salesmanship. It has encouraged and cheered you when it might have criticised. It has in various ways lightened your task by opening up the avenues of business. It has kept you in the good graces of the customer by its prompt deliveries and courteous treatment in handling errors.

In a word, its policies are not only just but generous. Are you inclined to magnify what you think are little injustices and to minimize large generosities? How much have you suffered at the hands of your house as compared

with your gains and good treatment? The tendency of men is to charge up small causes for complaints, and to fail to enter on the right side of the ledger the things of which they are the beneficiaries.

Its Claims Upon Your Service

You are first and last and all the time the representative of your house. In dealing with the customer you stand for the house, and are expected to act as the house would act if in your place. The customer judges the house by its representative. Misrepresentation puts your house in a false light and does it an injury. You have ignored the golden rule. If the house were to misrepresent you to the customer you would be justly angry.

You are called upon to render an honest service as well as a full service. If you are paid a salary, when do you consider you have earned it? How much do your relations with the house require? You would probably answer that question in terms of hours and the way they are employed. Take, for instance, what you call your own time. You spend it in a way that unfits you for the next day's work. It suffers, and your house sustains a loss. Did you earn your salary?

Instead of a salary you are paid a commission. You get just what you work for, so that if you lose a day the loss is yours. The loss is not yours alone; the house as well as you lost that day. It can never be recovered. There was that much business it will never get. It is not paying you a salary, but it employed you to work and render a steady service, not for indolence. It has a right to demand this service.

You may do your work in a slip-shod and careless manner and lose sales. You say, I am the loser; the house does not

have to pay for it. But the house does have to pay for it. There is one thing you do not own and that is the territory. It belongs to the house. You were sent into it to work it, not to burn it up. You have defrauded the house out of so much territory by bad, careless selling, and yet if any one were to call you a thief you would fight at the drop of the hat.

The house has claims upon your most efficient service. You may be conscientiously industrious but lacking in selling ability. You are not meeting the requirements, or acting squarely as long as you do not do everything in your power to improve your salesmanship. In your preapproach all of these things must be considered.

Its Claims Upon Your Loyalty

Your connections with a house require that you be loyal to its policies and interests. There may be things about the house which you do not approve. There are various ways of expressing that disapproval.

Your loyalty may be so strong, and your interest in the house so genuine, that you raise a protest against a measure or policy that you believe will hurt the house. You are jealous for its standing and success, and you want no reflection cast upon it or anything done that will endanger its highest good. That protest is surcharged with loyalty.

Another man raises a protest regarding the same thing, or anything, which takes the form of bitter criticism. The criticism is not intended to be helpful. It does not spring from a deep sense of loyalty but from a purely critical spirit. There is nothing constructive about it from the standpoint of motive or the form it assumes. It is not concerned with the possibility of the house being injured by it.

Mills and Stevens worked for a large eastern manufacturing concern. Mills was asked how he liked his work and replied, "The work is all right but the company is terrible. They are a hard-fisted lot, trying to get all they can out of you and giving as little as they can in return. They have no regard for the rights and interests of their employees, and there is a lot of dissatisfaction in the ranks; so much so that I went to the manager the other day and told him frankly he wasn't treating the men right and that his methods were causing much discontent and grumbling among the workers."

Mills admitted that he did not get very far with his criticism, and a month later he was out on the street looking for another job. He was not discharged because of his complaint, for every progressive concern welcomes suggestions or criticisms when designed to be helpful, but his whole attitude was such that he could think only of the negative side of the situation which led him to gossip with other men in the organization and thus create a feeling of discontent and opposition.

You cannot detect in this critical attitude any spirit of loyalty. It is sheer fault-finding that disregards all claims the house has upon its employees, and has no concern about the detrimental influence it may exert.

Selling the House

It will readily be seen that if you maintained such a disloyal and critical attitude towards your house as that just noted you would not be enthusiastic in selling the house to the customer. You would either be silent or half-hearted about it. But the house must be sold.

Selling the house is an essential factor in making the sale. It gives you standing as its salesman. It is a guar-

antee of your goods. The house well sold is a most important part of the sale. It establishes confidence and insures the quality of the product.

In your pre-approach you are placing yourself in the right mental attitude relative to the house in the five respects noted. You are a part of the house. Think of yourself as holding a close relation to it. What affects it affects you, and what you do for it you do for yourself. Take upon yourself its responsibilities, and make its problems and interests your own. In that state of mind you will sell the house enthusiastically and the product as effectively as if you produced it.

ATTITUDE TOWARDS YOUR PROPOSITION

How you will sell the proposition depends entirely upon your attitude toward it. If it seems to you nothing more than something to be sold and that you might as well try to sell as anything else, you will, most likely, in a short time be looking for another proposition.

Short Lived Enthusiasm

It is a common experience for a salesman to go out for a few weeks on a proposition and "tear the turf" with record smashing orders, and then, for some unaccountable reason, let down. His enthusiasm wanes. He explains to the home office that conditions are bad, that it is hard to do business, and that something has gone wrong with the territory. The bottom has dropped out of industrial activities; nobody has any money; people are simply not buying.

He is the type of man who is enthusiastic for awhile about a proposition and then grows cold. The seed has fallen on stony ground; it springs up quickly and soon withers because there was no depth of earth.

Before he left the house his batteries were charged with sales building ideas; he was fired with the advantages of his product and the service it brings to the customer. After a few weeks, meeting the objections of customers and listening to adverse comments by other salesmen, he begins to lose faith in the proposition. His enthusiasm evaporates and he is on the lookout for another position. Other salesmen will sell the same proposition for years and realize a fine income; customers continue to find in it all it was claimed to be.

Merits of the Proposition

A right mental attitude towards a proposition involves the question of its character. It is a matter of values. What needs does it supply? Does it meet them adequately, or is it defective in essential features? Is it in workmanship and in all other respects as good as the idea it represents?

Before one can have a right attitude towards the proposition such questions will be raised and intelligently examined. A thing may have some interesting features and not be especially serviceable. The prospect would be attracted to it, but upon fuller inspection would not be enthused.

There is one test question for you to ask yourself after a careful understanding of the proposition: "If I were a prospect would I purchase this? Would it grip my interest and compel me to buy?" If you answer this in the negative you are not in the right mental attitude to sell it.

The salesman may sell a product which could not be sold to him. He, himself, may not be a logical prospect. That, however, does not prevent him from seeing the values his product represents and its serviceability to those who need

it. He says, "I would gladly purchase it, if I were a prospect."

Salability of the Proposition

A thing that meets a wide need is salable, provided other conditions are met. Or it may have certain values and yet appeal to a very limited number of prospects. It does not supply a general need, and would interest but a small class of people.

Again, it may have decided merit and meet a large need, but the price may be so prohibitive that it would have a very limited sale. Under these various conditions the product is not salable as the salesman would consider it.

In the one case, your mental attitude would be that, in having such few prospects the percentage of sales, based on the law of averages, would be too low. In the other case, you would say, "Personally I would not pay that price for it, and I would lose confidence in myself as soon as the question of price arose."

Personal Interest in the Proposition

The product may be meritorious in every sense of the word. It is serviceable and meets a real need. It may be as salable as it is serviceable, and capable of ministering to a large number of prospects.

If these two facts alone were to determine the matter your mental attitude would be wholly favorable to selling the proposition. There is another most important element that enters into the case. Is it the kind of proposition you would personally be interested in selling? Would you adapt yourself to it? Does it fit your type?

You cannot sell equally well any sort of a proposition, however good it may be. You cannot be equally inter-

ested in all propositions, and you can sell best the one that arouses in you the greatest enthusiasm.

Let us suppose that you are especially interested in an educational proposition and are peculiarly adapted to selling it. If a mechanical proposition came under your notice the likelihood is it would not appeal to you at all, as far as selling it is concerned. You would sell it for a brief time, while you will stay by the educational service for years.

In getting this right mental attitude towards the proposition it is of the first importance that you make no mistake regarding this matter of adaptability and personal interest.

ATTITUDE TOWARDS YOUR CUSTOMER

Your mental attitude will depend upon the type of customer you expect to meet. You can have a certain general attitude towards all prospects in declaring they can all be sold. But your attitude must be of a more specific nature which requires you, in your pre-approach, to think of definite types.

The Indifferent Prospect

You will meet many men who are indifferent to your proposition; how are they going to affect you? How do you expect to wake them up?

A district representative of a nationally organized concern, handling a product of universal appeal to business men was asked one day, "I presume you make a business of systematically calling on men in all lines of business and developing prospects wherever you can find them." "Oh, no," he said, "I never regard a man a prospect until he has shown some kind of interest in our proposition."

This man was supplied with leads from his home office, and as long as he had enough leads to keep himself going, he would not organize a force to go out to call on a man unless he had some kind of a committal from him. As a prospect-finder this man was a cipher. When leads were plentiful he turned in business, but when the leads dropped off his slogan was, "send me more leads and I will get you more business."

A large number of your prospects may never even think of your proposition. In that state they cannot be sold. What is your attitude towards this class? To keep out of their way and use your energies on those who do not need to be knocked in the head to wake them up? Or will your attitude be that they *can* be interested and sold?

The Antagonistic Prospect

You will find the antagonistic prospect on your list. He does not like to be sold. He tries to make you feel you are wasting your time.

In getting your mind into a settled attitude regarding this man you will say to yourself, "Don't be afraid of him. Be a man among men. This man will not buy from men who make it appear they are afraid of him."

It is such an easy thing to get into a verbal fight, especially when the prospect steps on your toes in slamming your proposition. Antagonism always has the effect of stirring up or increasing antagonism on the part of the other fellow.

You say, "I will remember that. He cannot get me into a dispute. I am there to sell him, not to argue with him, for arguing never closed a deal."

What you won't do is all right for the negative side of the matter. What *will* you do? Do you now know just what

your attitude towards this man would be if he were your next prospect? How would you overcome his antagonism and get him into a friendly frame of mind relative to your proposition? That will depend upon your own mental attitude. When you come to the volume on "The Customer" you will observe many examples of how various types of customers are to be handled.

The Discourteous Prospect

Some prospects seem to think a salesman has no claim upon courtesy; that he must expect to be offended. The prospect says, in effect, that he did not ask you to come, you are not welcome and you must not object to what happens. He thinks of you as wasting his time, and before you waste too much he must take drastic measures to get rid of you.

How do you feel towards this situation, this type of prospect? Do you expect to be shocked when he becomes rude? Is this man's impoliteness going to startle you? Will you be offended? Are you going to take the position that he is a cave man and should be treated as such?

You know you have no intention of treating him with the same sort of discourtesy that he shows you, but you are going to do your best to sell him. You settled this fact with yourself by preparing for such an encounter: "If there is any time when I am under the special necessity of being polite and courteous it is when I have to put up with the discourteous and impolite prospect."

For the salesman that is a sensible mental attitude. Why will you take that ground?

1. On general principles, you will not allow yourself to descend to his plane.

2. Because it is suicidal to take his ground.
3. True courtesy has frequently revealed the prospect to himself, has won him over and made a buyer and friend.
4. You never can tell what influence he may have with other prospects.

The Susceptible Customer

The easily influenced customer is occasionally a problem to the conscientious salesman. He is the man who can not say no.

In anticipating this customer you may have taken the position that you are not handling his side of it. Is that your attitude?

You would instantly accept the principle that one should not take advantage of another that would involve him in a loss. The easiest way to take advantage of one is to find his weakness and take advantage of it without regard to the service rendered. You would not uphold anyone else doing this, even if the weakness of the other disgusted you. Now this man's susceptibility may be his weakness, but it is itself a weakness to take advantage of it.

You don't want to see yourself playing the role of a weakling; you believe you are too much of a man for that. In selling this man you may come to realize that the proposition will not be of sufficient service to him to justify purchasing it. And you call to mind that the central fact of salesmanship is service. Then what attitude will you take towards this type of prospect? You do not want to lose the sale, and you do not want to take advantage of him. Here again, "Character Analysis" and "Handling the Customer" will come to your aid.

ATTITUDE TOWARDS YOUR TERRITORY

Following the selection of your proposition is the problem of the territory. Are you willing to go where the house will send you, if there is nothing in your way to prevent it?

Virgin Territory

The specialty salesman is sometimes anxious to have a territory assigned him where his product has not been introduced. Any other territory, to his mind, is all "shot to pieces." Another man wants a territory in which some other man has made a big record.

The question just now is, whether or not your mental attitude is a safe guide in selecting a territory. Your income is in your field of labor. You naturally want to earn it under the most favorable conditions. Are you going to find conditions to your liking, or are you going to make the best use of whatever conditions you may find?

Any Territory Good Territory

In analyzing the matter you may reach the conclusion that the territory has little or nothing to do with it; that human nature is about the same wherever you find it.

After all, the question of territory is a good deal like that of prospects. Here is a most likely prospect; there is not one chance in fifty that he would turn down your proposition. There is every reason why he should buy. You call on him with every assurance, but you can not budge him. He has given you the surprise of your life.

Here is another man who you say, is hardly worth seeing, as there is little likelihood that he would consider your proposition. You present it to him, however, and you have a surprise as big as the last one—you sell him.

It is often the same way with territories. What you would pick out as an ideal territory may array against you more problems than you would find elsewhere. The territory you consider poor may turn out to be a gold mine. You fall upon hidden wealth.

As a general thing it is not a question of the territory but a question of salesmanship, provided you have a proposition that meets a real need. One territory can be made as good as another to the man who knows how to sell, and one territory is no better than another to the man whose salesmanship is defective.

Territory That Has Been Spoiled

It is a common thing to hear a salesman say, "If they would only give me decent territory, I, too, could make a record," thus placing the responsibility for poor returns upon someone else than himself.

To this salesman any territory would be the same. If a factory shuts down in the city he is working, that is a signal for him to move on. He tells his house that the territory is in a "rotten" condition, that there is no hope of doing anything until things change for the better.

What is your attitude towards a so-called "rotten" territory? Is the territory really so bad, or is it some salesman's state of mind induced by bad salesmanship? In that frame of mind how is any man likely to go at his work? Can he get positive results out of negative attitudes?

We hear a salesman complaining about a former salesman in that territory who spoiled the trade by the manner in which he treated his customers. Which is worse, a territory spoiled by bad existing conditions, or one that is spoiled by a previous salesman?

Should a salesman go into such a territory in a pessimistic frame of mind, or with his fighting blood stirred up, determined to get business in spite of conditions? The salesman is a fighter in the sense that he must combat obstacles. These things are to be mastered and should not be allowed to master him. He must stand his ground courageously.

The true salesman looks upon these opposing forces as a test of his endurance and resourcefulness. It is an opportunity that has come his way to prove to the company what he is worth.

If your house were to place you where other men have failed, you may take it as a compliment to your selling ability. That, in fact, is what it is, if you measure up to what the house expects of you. Roll up your sleeves and say, "I will not disappoint them. I will prove to them that their confidence was not misplaced. I will fight it out along this line until I win."

In that spirit you can make the worst territory in the country productive; you will establish your real worth and can have from your house almost anything you want. If you are a man of such qualities you will not be looking for positions,—they will be looking for you.

ATTITUDE TOWARDS COMPETITION

Before you go out to see a customer it is important that you have some definite ideas about competition. If you have not made up your mind to some things regarding this, you are very liable to make some serious mistakes the moment a new situation confronts you. By having a right attitude towards competition you will know how to turn it to your advantage.

Competition Is A Fixed Fact

The salesman who says, "There is no competition in my line; we simply don't recognize competition," is due for an early awakening.

A man's opinion goes down like a snowball in July in the presence of stubborn facts. The fact that you do not believe a thing counts for nothing, if that thing is actually true. Believing it or disbelieving it does not affect it, but the way you feel about it affects you in your relation to it.

Make no mistake about this—competition is a settled fact. Your product may be the only article of its kind in the field, but it is not the only thing for which people are spending money. When you fail to sell your proposition because the prospect has spent his money for something else, you are up against real competition. You take the first step in dealing effectively with this thing when you realize that it is a fact.

A Disturbing Factor

If you are afraid of competition you will be seriously handicapped. The more you are afraid of your competitor's goods, the less you will be sold on your own. The more you are sold on your own proposition, the less competing goods will trouble you.

The fearful man says, "No wonder my competitor is getting all the business; just look what a fine proposition he has to offer." If he were handling that proposition he would say exactly the same thing about the product he is now selling as a competing proposition.

With a negative attitude towards competition you will brood over the advantages your competitor has over you. You watch his success with a jealous eye, and bemoan the

fact that he has you whipped and out-classed on this and that point. You contend that if you were handling that product your stakes would be doubled.

In planning your pre-approach you will first allow for competition in one form or another, and then settle with yourself as to the right method of dealing with it.

How to Deal with Competition

The first thing is to be intelligently informed on the competing product. To ignore it is to be short-sighted and foolish. The wise general makes it a point to know the enemy's forces lined up against him. There is one man who does not ignore your competitor's goods, and that is your prospect. You must know the goods as well as he.

Do not be afraid to recognize honest values in your competitor's goods. You will gain nothing and lose much by refusing to recognize every good feature. They stand upon their own merits, and a negative attitude on your part does not deprive them of their excellent qualities.

When a prospect points out the good features of a competing proposition, be big enough to acknowledge them frankly. A broad-minded man has no use for a two-by-four, narrow-minded man who sees no good in anything but his own interests. He appreciates honest, genuine acknowledgment in another and is glad to deal with such a man.

You can go a step further and say, "If my product is in any way superior to that of my competitor, my acknowledgment of its merits will emphasize the superiority of my own." It will then be "up to" the prospect to do some honest acknowledging. You have set him an example. The fact that he appreciated the merits of a competing line will make it possible to appreciate still more the superiority of yours.

Be fair minded. Examine judicially both propositions. Then build on the strong features of your own. Do you recall when, in a debating society, you were appointed to debate the negative side of a question when, in reality, you believed in the affirmative? You were required to find everything that could be found in support of your position. You did all in your power to break down the arguments against you. In doing this you found much in favor of the view you were called upon to support. Before you had finished presenting all the arguments your own conviction had changed.

In like manner, when you examine your competitor's product and have set out its strongest claims, you will match with it your own product point by point and note every superiority that you have a right to claim.

You are now ready to meet competition and deal with it in a generous and intelligent manner. You will be glad to have the competing product presented, since by comparison the merits of yours will appear in a stronger light. Don't forget a six-foot man standing alone never looks so tall as when placed beside a five-foot man.

Competition is the stimulus of trade, so the more prospects your competitor calls upon and does not sell the more sales he leaves for you to close. He will sell them the idea and you can complete the sale by selling them the thing itself. The more educational groundwork he does for you, the more time you can spend on closing the deal. In Section II of this volume will be found a further analysis of competition.

ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE SALE

In the final analysis, the sale is what counts. At the home office when your sales for the week are counted up, you are estimated, not by what you thought of this or that,

but by the sales made and entered to your credit. You did think about one thing and another of which they may know nothing; and it is now reflected in your record. It is for you to show them how your thinking has been translated into actual results.

The Test of Your Preparation

The winter and spring training of the big leaguers is lost sight of when the strikes, balls, runs, and outs are registered on the score board. The player then proves what he is. Under the pitiless eye of the public his rating is determined, and he stands before fandom as a brilliant success, a mediocre player, or a dead failure.

The fans know nothing about the details of his training, but they would not be cheering him today if during the yesterdays he had not played this same game over many times; if he had not done the necessary headwork; if he had not been inspired with the thought of victory and planned every play. Today's game was not the first time that game was played. It was a test of his preparation.

Your sale is won or lost with yourself before you handle it. A right mental attitude is half of the battle. If there is a weakness in your preparation it will appear when you come before your prospect. He is watching you play the game.

You have strengthened your muscles and are in condition to hit hard and strive steadily for the goal. The sale is the field where you will make a run or be struck out. If your attitude of mind has been positive, and you have carefully organized your knowledge for the building of the sale, your confidence in making the sale is so strong that you will sweep away resistance with comparative ease and surprising certainty.

The Prospect the Beneficiary

You have been planning with the sound belief that your customer's interests will be served in buying from your firm and that his needs will be met in the use of your goods. A faltering faith will make shipwreck of your best laid plans.

"I get tired of calling every day on men and pulling their legs for money," said a life insurance salesman. "What do you mean," asked his friend, "don't you believe in life insurance?" "Yes, I believe in it to be sure, or I would not be selling it," he replied. "Do you believe that men are better off with insurance than without it?" "Certainly I do." "Then why do you apologize and put yourself in a humiliating position when calling on your prospect?"

It all depends on the way you think about your proposition. If you fix your mind on the commissions you hope to earn, you will feel like a beggar, an object of charity, trying to get your prospect to advance money to cover your living expenses.

On the other hand, if you forget about your commissions and think of the peace of mind you are bringing to your policy holder and his family; if you think of their future welfare, education, and the many advantages that will come to them because of this insurance, you will come to feel a real responsibility to the beneficiaries. You will realize that you are not doing your part unless you give your prospect every opportunity to buy. You are conferring a favor, not seeking one.

Plan for your prospect. Put yourself in his place and observe the golden rule. Sacrifice a point if necessary for his advantage. It will not take him long to see that you are inspired in your urging and appeals with a view to his

good. He will not think of you as a salesman, but as a friend trying to render him a much needed service.

If he is to get the impression of such service, it must be the dominant fact of your salesmanship. That must be your own mental attitude towards the customer and the sale.

A Positive Attitude for Positive Results

You may have positive confidence in your proposition but negative feelings regarding the prospect. The combination gives you a negative attitude towards the sale. You are not sure he will be influenced by its merits as you are. You know the price is right but are afraid he will think it too high.

You can develop so many negations as to render ineffective every positive attitude to your goods. These negative things are not salable; nobody will buy them. The price, for example, does not sell the proposition, but the proposition sells the price.

Indulge in positive thinking. Negative thoughts will get you nowhere. You are to start out under the positive conviction that your prospects will buy. That attitude will be responsible for the manner in which you will present the goods and make the sale. People will misjudge your timidity or misgivings and at once conclude that something is wrong with the proposition and will distrust both it and you. You may think you have a gold brick and are afflicted with twinges of conscience in trying to get rid of it.

Objections of the prospect tend to unsettle some salesmen. They are liable to create a negative mental attitude. Against this you must bring every positive thought and feeling.

Be loyal to your own convictions.

Take into account these possibilities before making a sale. Safeguard yourself against the effect of all negative conditions. The finest thing that was ever sold was not proof against the criticism of some prospect. You allowed some little thing to which he tied an objection to blind you to all the great merits it possessed.

Belief in Yourself

You yourself are the only fellow whom you need to believe. To make shipwreck of your life you are the only fellow you have to doubt. Believing in other people is not a substitute. You will find that belief a broken crutch; if you lean on it, it will let you down.

The men who win a positive success, who build great enterprises, and put over big business believe in themselves. In many instances, at the beginning, no one else believed in them. People thought they were crazy, that their enterprises were empty air castles.

The man who does not believe in himself must not blame others if they do not believe in him. You start with yourself, not with the opinions of other people. If they have no confidence in you and foresee only failure, it is up to you to prove that they are poor prophets.

Most people thought Bell was insane when he was experimenting with his crude instrument in his boarding house to solve the problem of the telephone. When he tried to sell stock at ten cents a share they were fully assured of his insanity. The more he believed in himself, the more crazy they thought he was. But it was that unconquerable self-faith that brought forth one of the greatest inventions of modern times.

You are a stranger to the man to whom you apply for a position. The only way he can know of your ability to sell his goods is the manner in which you sell him your service. It is the first sale in that connection you will make.

A young man applied for a position on a sales force. He expressed his interest in selling the proposition, and declared, "I can sell it." The employer asked him if he had ever sold the line. When he said that he had not, he was asked why he was so sure he could do so. His answer was, "In the main, your force consists of average men, and they are selling the goods. I am at least an average man, and what they can do I can do. What is done by men of my caliber can be done again, and I can do it."

He was placed on the force. Business men are not employing doubts and uncertainties. They have to fire too many of those. They want men who can put self-faith to work, who have the courage of their convictions and say, "Give me a chance—I can do it." Believe in yourself. Measure up your abilities with a given task. Estimate how much is lacking and go to work on yourself. Assure yourself you can either do the thing or can fit yourself to do it.

The failure to sell the first prospect or many of them, does not discount the self-faith of the man who has a well-grounded confidence in himself. Success has to do with the law of averages, as every sensible person knows.

Success does not originate with the sales one actually makes, but with that belief in himself that makes the sales. Sales are not made without it. In the measure in which the thermometer of self-confidence drops, in that measure your ambition wanes and sales die on your hands.

Suppose you are running on a flat tire of disbelief. How long will it take to batter and distort the rim and put the

whole machine out of commission? Keep the tire hard by filling it with the inspiration of a sound belief in yourself. You won't get far running on a flat tire.

From what has been said it will readily appear how necessary it is to have the right mental attitude towards the things we have considered. This part of your pre-approach is nothing short of a grounding in fundamental principles. You will act as you think. To act rightly is to think constructively.

How many lost sales would have been won if the salesman had thought through these problems before coming to the customer.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS

To get the most out of your studies devote regularly a definite time to the work. Studying in streaks has the same effect upon the mind as eating in streaks would have upon the body. Be systematic.

I. There is a Right Attitude to be Taken Towards Yourself, Your House and Your Proposition.

1. To what extent is it true that we get what we are expecting—what we are looking for?
2. What things should the man call to mind who is afraid of himself?
3. What is the one right way of laying the ghost of fear?
4. The house has claims upon the salesman. When does criticism become disloyalty?
5. What must the proposition contain in order to arouse in you an intelligent enthusiasm?

II. There is a Right Attitude to Sustain Towards Your Customer, the Territory, Competition and the Sale.

1. State in a word what you would not do when dealing with indifferent, antagonistic and discourteous prospects.
2. How does the expert salesman feel toward territory? Does the territory have much to do with the salesman's success?
3. When is competition a disturbing factor? How should you treat a competing proposition?
4. What point was made of the illustration of the ball players?
5. If you were selling your services, what one quality must be especially evident?

PRACTICAL TALKS SERIES

SELF-CONTROL

PRACTICAL TALKS SERIES

SELF-CONTROL

That man can put on a bold front who has no battles to fight—
Keep your hand on that throttle—
You can wreck your life in the way you take the curve.

IF THEY cannot stop that run-away team something is bound to smash; some one may be killed.

That is simple enough in the matter of a run-away. We have often witnessed it. The one saving fact, however, is that a man is handling the lines and he may bring the horses under control.

When you yourself are the run-away it is different. Instead of bringing yourself under control you are promoting the run-away, and something serious is going to happen.

If you were the only one who got "smashed" that would be bad enough. But there are other people in the path of the run-away whose interests you endanger.

A man's self-control is commendable according to the effort it requires. A negative sort of fellow asked a very quick tempered man, "Why don't you control your temper?" He replied, "Man, I control more temper in one day than you do in ten years."

Any excess is a lack of self-control. It may reach the point where it will get the better of you. The trouble is not that you have a temper. If that piece of steel had no temper it would make a useless tool. The trouble is that the temper gets away with you.

You have such a vivid imagination that you can exaggerate facts most proficiently. In other words, you could not resist the temptation to exceed the truth, it gets the better of you, and people who seem to be lacking in imagination have taken to calling you a liar.

If we could only master ourselves we would save a lot of lost ground, lost prestige, and lost other things.

Goethe had no idea what a fine suggestion he was giving salesmen when he said, "I will be lord over myself. No man who cannot master himself is worthy to rule, and only he can rule."

You ask, "What does that have to do with salesmanship?" It is about two-thirds of selling. The man of perfect self-control not only registers the fact in himself, but unconsciously the prospect yields to that masterfulness.

Just let yourself get excited and the prospect thinks you are a fanatic. The only thing you will close will be the door as you leave. Let your anxiety to make the sale get the better of you, and the prospect will suspect that something is wrong with the proposition. Yield to the temptation to argue the point and you will soon kill the sale. Become discourteous and it is time to quit. Begin "knocking" your competitor and you lose the respect of the prospect; you are only wasting your time.

In all of these situations you failed to be the master of yourself. You were ruled by mistaken propensities.

Napoleon had this quality of self-mastery in a marked degree. When his eye rested upon his men they felt at once the strength and magnetism of his personal power. So perfectly did he command himself that in the heat of battle he could sit upon his horse and map out his next campaign

without losing a point of the conflict. His power of concentration was amazing.

Self-control will drive the steeds of your ambition and keep them from running away. It will harness your energies and make every move count. It will convince your prospect he is dealing with a man among men. It will turn defeat into victory, and keep you from losing your head when the same great success would transform a weaker man into a simpleton.

SELF-QUIZ

1. Do I take the right mental attitude towards my work?
2. Do I think in terms of large achievements?
3. Do I picture myself as a success in my work due to previous constructive thinking?
4. Do I analyze my own mental attitude before attempting to think of my success or failure in my proposition?
5. Do I remember my successful attempts in business rather than my failures?
6. Do I keep myself physically fit in order to be mentally fit?
7. Do I realize that it is just as important to know how to estimate my ability as to know where I am weak?
8. Do I place the true value on my product in order to solicit the confidence and support of patrons?
9. Do I prove to my patrons that my house lives up to all its promises?

10. Do I realize that it is up to me properly to represent my house through my personal contact with the customer?
11. Do I show a sincere interest in all my prospects, regardless of how easy or how hard they are to sell?
12. Before calling on the prospect do I believe he should and will buy?

SECTION II

BUSINESS AND COMPETITIVE CONDITIONS

BUSINESS AND COMPETITIVE CONDITIONS

KNOWING BUSINESS CONDITIONS

Conditions Vary with the Line Sold.
Favorable or unfavorable to Your line.
A Closed Territory.
A strike in progress.
Take Conditions as you find them.
A Special Interest Booms Business.
Opportunities created for the Salesman.
The Customer's Trade.
Selling a higher quality.
Introducing new things.
Selling to overstocked customers.
Attitude Toward Existing Difficulties.
Passing up territory.
"Hard times" complaint.

KNOWING COMPETITIVE CONDITIONS

Measuring Competition.
A mistaken estimate of an opponent.
Comparing your line with the other.
Knowing Your Competitor's Goods.
The prospect may be well informed.
Competitor Sold the prospect the idea.
Your chance to sell him the proposition.
Competition created doubts.
How Your Competitor Sells his Goods.
Competing goods and competing salesmanship.
Studying the competitor's methods.
Making Use of Competition.
The advertising Salesman.
Competition has its compensations.

SECTION II

BUSINESS AND COMPETITIVE CONDITIONS

HAVING fixed the right mental attitude, the next step in your pre-approach is to become familiar with the conditions affecting the sale of your product. To proceed otherwise would be guesswork and that always entails serious loss. As contrasted with the old idea of selling, the modern way is to *plan more and talk less.*

The planning for the sale is based on a careful analysis of all the conditions that might possibly enter into the sale. Imagine a corporation starting to lay the ties and rails of a railroad before the road had been laid out and the engineers had done their work. A general who had no other plan of military tactics than simply to throw a great force of men at the enemy would not win many battles.

It sometimes takes longer to prepare for action than it does to do the thing itself, and doing the thing will depend upon the thoroughness of the preparation. This is true of salesmanship. There is a right and wrong way of proceeding. The farmer cannot obtain a crop without first preparing the soil, and the salesman cannot sell successfully without first planning his approach. There is a scientific way of farming and a scientific way of selling.

Do not let the word "scientific" disturb you. It simply means a knowledge of facts so related as to get the right results. In other words, it is the ability to act in an intelligent and sensible manner.

Pre-approach is to salesmanship what proper preparation is to anything else. Start without it, and you imitate the general who wastes his men. As the word indicates, it pre-

cedes the sale. If you know the conditions you will be able to adjust yourself to them. When you know what to do and how to do it, before taking up a task, you decrease the likelihood of failure. Otherwise you meet difficulties that you are unable to surmount; you go at it blindfolded and start guessing; you are handicapped and hindered at every point. Under trying situations you do not know just how to act.

When you realize the competition you have to meet and the peculiarities of prospective customers, you can act accordingly. But when you meet these things without first having taken them into account, you become confused. While trying to adjust yourself you lose the sale.

Unless you have analyzed your proposition thoroughly you are sure to get into difficulties when you start selling. The pre-approach is as essential in making a sale as the facts and points of law are to the lawyer in pleading a case.

The amount of preparation necessary in your pre-approach will depend upon the nature of the thing you have to sell and the range of conditions you may be called upon to meet. The following viewpoints will have to be considered:

I. Business Conditions.
II. Competitive Conditions.
III. The Customer.
IV. The Proposition.
V. The Salesman.

KNOWING BUSINESS CONDITIONS

Business conditions may be favorable or unfavorable to the sale of your goods. Prosperity and business depression sweep over the country in waves. While business is thriving and prosperous in one part of the country, it may be

slack and discouraging in another. Various groups of industries are centered in different localities, and when business is going strong in one center, in another section it may be partially shut down. Before going into a community to sell your goods, you will want to know what conditions to expect and the best way of handling them to get the most business.

While conditions may be discouraging in one locality they may be entirely favorable in another. Failure to take advantage of the latter would be to pass up profits for yourself and for your company.

By analyzing conditions in advance you carefully observe the "lay of the land;" become acquainted with the difficulties and possibilities of the territory, and make it easy to adjust yourself and your methods to the situation.

Such knowledge of business conditions is an important factor in your pre-approach. Your analysis of them may be viewed from a number of different angles.

Conditions Vary with the Line Sold

A salesman may be tempted to pass up a certain territory because a salesman in another line told him that there is no business in that section. On investigation, however, he finds that the very conditions that made business bad for the other salesman make it good for him. Or, because some other salesman reports that business is good in a certain place, he gives up a fair business where he is and moves into that territory in the hope of making a big "killing," but on arrival learns that the other man's success depended upon conditions that are contrary to his.

For example: You may be handling gas fixtures, gas stoves, lamps, or flatirons, and you discover that no gas system has been installed in the town, and, consequently,

the people can make no use of your goods. There is no more call here for your line than there would be for fur coats at the equator or for an ice cream parlor at the North Pole.

On the other hand, your line may be that of installing electric lighting and heating equipment for homes, stores, and offices. Upon analyzing this territory you find the conditions are exactly suitable. A lighting system has but recently been installed, and public interest is ripe for the line you are handling. The very absence of gas creates a deeper interest in anything that approaches or improves upon these advantages. When people get to using the new system of lighting and heating there will be a drop in the sale of kerosene and gasoline lamps and stoves, but the merchant will double his sale in other supplies.

Thus, while this town offers no opportunity for the one line, it offers every inducement for the other. It would be bad business for you not to know the exact conditions of this field before starting operations. Any up-to-date house selling a line requiring the use of gas would keep its salesmen out of a town where no gas system has been installed.

A Closed Territory

There may be other conditions in the territory which you can learn before starting to sell. A community is in the midst of a strike. The industry affected is the backbone of its commercial life. From it the people, in the main, draw their sustenance. The strike is stubborn. Every day both capital and labor suffer a heavy loss. Money is scarce, and the people are conserving every dollar. The stringency is very acute. Winter is approaching and the whole community is in an anxious state.

Ordinarily this is good territory, but before staking your success in that field under these conditions some important

questions will need to be decided. If you were a piano salesman would you try to do business there at this time when the people are using their ingenuity to make a dollar go as far as possible for the necessities of life? If you decide to remain and fight it out, how will you turn these conditions to advantage?

Would it be good business for an enterprising house to send you into this town with food products to be sold directly to the consumer? If so, what arguments and methods would you use to stimulate business? Would these be favorable conditions for making a special drive for business and creating a demand for your line? Would such a drive have the effect of advertising the goods so that by the time prosperity returned the trade would be established and the goods could be sold in larger quantities?

The salesman does not always decide the question as to what shall be done in his territory. His function is to sell, and his house expects him to make the most of the conditions. Any salesman can send his house unfavorable reports on the weather, territorial, agricultural, financial, and labor conditions, but the salesman who is in demand by successful houses is the one who takes conditions as he finds them, knows in advance what he has to face, and if it is wise for him to go into it, leaves no stone unturned to get business.

In your pre-approach it is well to consider whether the majority of people in a given territory are influenced in their buying by immediate necessities or by future gains. Does it consist of the factory laboring class, farmers, merchants, or industrial magnates? Or, is it a well balanced community where men in all stages of prosperity can be found?

A Special Interest Booms Business

Sometimes a salesman can take advantage of current events in the nature of some activity, interest, or enterprise that gives a temporary boom to business. A town is captured by a new idea. The community falls under the spell. It is the psychological moment for the salesmen handling the appropriate line to make a clean-up. Radio is introduced. It is new, wonderful, fascinating. It appeals to the imagination. Every boy becomes a radio fiend. Here is a market for the radio salesman.

An insurance salesman in a thriving town in Iowa was struggling hard to build up a clientele. He had tried several times to induce a man who had a good salary to take out insurance, but was always turned down. The salesman had come to know the prospect fairly well and at last succeeded in interesting him. He made him see that it was suicidal the way he squandered his pay check each month. He had no mortgage on life and might be taken off at any time. He then pictured his young wife cast upon the world penniless, and under the necessity of earning her living. The appeal went home.

He took out a policy for $20,000. He made the initial payment and said to the salesman, "I have never done anything that gave me so much satisfaction. I will probably pay out lots of money on that policy, but it is a good investment, and my mind is at rest." A week or so later as the insured was going into the factory where he was employed, a piece of machinery burst and he was instantly killed.

The salesman trebled his business in that city.

Another salesman handling an improved type of fire engine learns that a neighboring city has been endangered by a ravaging fire. It is an opportune moment. If he can

but enthuse the "city fathers" on this proposition and advertise it effectively he will be given an opportunity to outfit the stations with his equipment.

These cases illustrate the need of pre-approach regarding existing conditions.

The Customer's Trade

If you are selling merchandise to a dealer, the class of his trade will have much to do with the grade of goods you place on his shelves and the sales arguments you will use. In a district where patrons belong to the poorer class the tendency is to buy the cheaper, hard-wearing materials, varied with certain goods of a more gaudy nature.

Assuming that you are selling goods of a better quality than the people in that district are accustomed to buy, would you pass up the district after giving the merchant a few arguments on quality goods? Would you ask him to buy a small assortment in the hope that he might sell them and be in the market for more? Or, would you see in this merchant an opportunity to introduce a better grade of goods and undertake to educate him to an appreciation of their value, so that he, in turn, would introduce them to his customers? On the other hand, would you content yourself with selling a few articles of extreme style so as to catch the attention of the more ambitious members of the community?

There are possibilities in this district which in time can give you good business. You study its needs and the best methods of procedure. If you can get the merchant to see that there is more profit in better goods, that he will thereby attract a better buying trade; and if you convince him that there is an element of pride in all people and a disposi-

tion to appear as well as possible among friends, you will educate that man and his patrons to your line.

Again, a certain community is overstocked with the class of goods you are handling. A survey of the facts shows that the merchants have more goods on hand than they can sell on the basis of a profitable turnover. Before their shelves are cleared they will have to sell at a sacrifice. What will you do? Pass up the community entirely or further overload the merchants' shelves.

By keeping in mind that it is the goods that are sold and not those that are kept in stock that make the money, your line of attack is clear. What these merchants need is merchandising information—plans and methods for moving their goods. If left alone to dig their way out they are headed for a great loss. At the best some will lose and possibly go out of business.

Will you show blind sympathy for them in their present state or will you pick the most enterprising among them, give them advertising plans and sales methods that will attract people to the store in search of your line, and thus establish a demand for your goods and bring in the buyers who will clear off the old stock as well? A later volume on "Safe-Guarding the House" will give you practical information on this subject.

How to Face Existing Difficulties

Your analysis of any territory may uncover conditions which are just a little more difficult than those that you would find in any other territory, but because those conditions exist is no reason for losing heart and assuming that your goods cannot be sold there. If your firm did not need some one of your mental caliber and ability to handle the situation, it would have hired some other salesman and

paid him a lower salary or commission. They give you as much as they can afford in order to encourage you to use your initiative, judgment, and perseverance in breaking down these difficulties, and, in spite of them, to find a way to do good business.

"Hard times" is a common complaint among buyers, and even when times are the best, they will use the expression to stall you off and discourage you. One community may have hard times because of industrial conditions, another because the crops are poor. If you were to accept the hard-times complaint at face value, you would not sell your goods in any community. Regardless of conditions, you will always find a certain percentage of people who are still in the market for your proposition. It requires only a little more care, when times seem hard, to find your prospects.

Any salesman can find an excuse for passing up a territory and coming back to it at a later date. Even though you can sell but a small portion of the community, it is better to get your product established and well known in that community than to wait until some competitor has gained a foothold.

Do not be afraid of spoiling a territory by a small number of sales, because those few sales will plant the seed for a bigger crop of orders when conditions have turned for the better. Your pre-approach is for the purpose of knowing and using these conditions, rather than being baffled by them.

Your pre-approach on business conditions resolves itself into ascertaining three things:

1. What the conditions are.
2. How they can be employed.
3. When, if ever, they can be allowed the right of way.

KNOWING COMPETITIVE CONDITIONS

In all of these situations the basic principles of the pre-approach are as indicated at the beginning. It is an analytical process. It is asking questions and finding the answers. The problem is to be stated and the solution found. Facts must be known and the right procedure followed. In order to secure the greatest success from your selling efforts, you will find it necessary to make a careful investigation of existing conditions and work out the best way of handling them.

Competitive conditions include both the salesman and his proposition. Too often the salesman thinks only of the goods in competition with his own. There may be practically no difference in the two propositions. They may be equally meritorious, but yet show a great difference in point of sales. If the difference does not lie in the proposition, it must lie in the salesman.

Measuring Competition

In your pre-approach you are interested in finding out about the other fellow and what he sells. You want to learn the best selling methods for your goods and how you can present your proposition to overcome that competition.

A general never wins battles by discounting the strength of the enemy; that is how he loses them. During the World War a certain ruler talked disparagingly of a "contemptible little army." Before long he had to reckon with it, and in the end went down to inglorious defeat.

A mistaken estimate of an opponent and what he represents is a childish way to fight. He may give you some "tricks" that never came your way. Use him, but do not abuse him or ignore him.

It is very important that you know the competitor's goods. The customer probably knows them very well. To know them is to know their defects as well as their strong points. This will start you comparing them with your own. To know them is to know in what particulars they are as good as yours. This will keep you sane in expressing a judgment. To "knock" your competitor's goods reflects on your own ability as a salesman. To know them is to realize in what respects they may be superior or inferior to your own.

You will then understand the seriousness of the competition and how to avoid mistakes. In any case, make a fair estimate of competing forces. Do not over-estimate them, and do not be so foolish as to under-estimate them. Have a thorough knowledge of all the things in your line that are on the market and why they are being sold. Your competitor is doing that very thing with your proposition.

Knowing Your Competitor's Goods

In your pre-approach keep in mind that your object is to bring about the best possible conditions for making the sale, so that when you approach your customer you will have all possible conditions lined up in your favor, and will be prepared to adjust yourself quickly to any new and unexpected condition that may arise.

How awkward it would be to have a prospect mention some advantage of your competitor's goods that you could not meet. Immediately his confidence in you is shaken. He has looked upon you as a counselor in business who proposes to guide him in the selection of the merchandise most suitable to his needs and most inviting as to terms of purchase. Until you have shown him that you are not informed on some vital point in your own business, he may place con-

siderable confidence in your recommendations. But, when you disappoint him by failing to give him information as to other products on the market, or show that you do not know as much as he does about competing lines, he is apt to lose interest and act upon his own judgment instead of upon yours.

Analyze your competitor's proposition as to its merits and salability. It is essential that you know it in every way in which it is likely to be known by the prospect. You are under no obligation to point out good features in his goods. But if you are well posted on such matters, it will give you an advantage in more ways than one. It will enable you to know just how well the prospect is acquainted with competing goods. Reference to them by your customer will not take you unawares.

In many instances you will discover that your competitor did not sell the prospect but merely sold him the idea. Here is your opportunity to make use of your competitor. One-half of the work is done and a very important half. It may have cost him a lot of effort to bring the prospect to a favorable attitude towards the general line. He has paved the way for your sale. You will take account of this possibility in your pre-approach.

Let us suppose you are a stock salesman with a live competitor in the field. Both propositions are attractive. The prospect has never invested. It is difficult to get him to see what an investment might mean to him. It may be that he has looked upon all investments as expedients by which people get "stung." Your competitor succeeded in changing his mind on these vital points. He brought the prospect to recognize the necessity of investing. He did not sell him, but he left him with serious thoughts on the subject and possibly committed to the salesman's viewpoint.

It is this possibility that you are considering in your pre-approach. How are you going to take it up where your competitor left off? You can tell by what your prospect says how he now feels about buying stock. You should be grateful and not sorry for that competitor's interview.

This is one situation. Note the opposite:

Your competitor, instead of silencing the prospect's doubts, seemed to have emphasized them. In his effort to sell one particular investment, he knocked all others, and in doing it undermined the prospect's confidence in any kind of investment. Not a very bright outlook. How are you going to handle the two problems instead of one—the problem of the prospect's attitude toward investments in general, and the problem caused by the salesman's failure to sell him? It is in such a situation that the unwise salesman who has not thought through these problems is tempted to "knock" the competitor.

Don't do it.

The prospect is quick to surmise that the competitor's proposition must be as good as yours, otherwise you would not take such great pains to knock him.

Have you considered the effect upon the prospect of speaking favorably of some feature of the competing article that pleased him? Will not that attitude lead him to regard you as a decent, generous sort of chap? With what kind of man does a customer prefer to deal?

In preparing your sale you will keep in mind the following points:

A. You will appraise your own proposition more intelligently when you properly appraise that of your competitor.

B. A competing proposition may or may not lead the prospect to be interested in what you represent.
He may classify yours with the other and purchase neither.

He may contrast the two and purchase yours.

Be prepared for either attitude.

C. A good salesman should have little trouble in selling the goods when the competitor has sold him the idea.

D. When the competitor has left him with a bad taste, it is better neither to uphold the competitor as a means of defending your goods, nor to criticise him. If you uphold the competitor, you oppose the prospect. If you criticise him the prospect may suspect you are trying to curry favor with him.
Just "saw wood." Sell your proposition.

E. In "knocking" a competitor the head of the hammer has the nasty habit of flying off and hitting the knocker in the face.

F. The opinion the prospect forms of the salesman has much to do with the prospect becoming or not becoming the patron.

How Your Competitor Sells His Goods

Another thing to be considered is how your competitor sells his goods. Competition has to do with two things. We usually think of it in terms of the goods, but the salesman makes a great mistake if he stops there. That with which the salesman has to compete is not simply the competitor's goods, but the competitor's salesmanship. The fact that the goods are sold is of first consideration. You may be handling the better line, but if your competitor outsells you, the superiority of your goods ceases to that extent

to be an asset to you. Thus, not only competing goods but competing salesmanship must be taken into account, with special emphasis upon the latter.

You will meet competitors in the field. In analyzing the situation in your pre-approach, you will say:

1. I must study the methods of my competitor who fails to close the deal. It may save me from what may be my own pitfalls.
2. I must study the methods of my successful competitor. I must carefully observe and analyze the elements of his success. I have to compete with his salesmanship, as well as with his goods, and since I must know the goods, so must I know his methods of selling.
3. There are three things to be sold, so I must note:
   How he sells himself to the prospect.
   How he sells his house.
   How he sells his proposition.

If you were a grocery salesman, what importance would you attach to the exact manner in which your competitor explains the sealing of canned goods? What does that have to do with the quality of the goods and with the merchant's patrons? In the last analysis, to whom is that salesman selling his goods—to the merchant or to his customers?

As you analyze the field in which you are planning to sell, it may be disturbing to you to find your competitor in town, working hard to extend his patronage among your customers. What are you going to do about it? Are you going to take an unfriendly attitude towards your competitor, as if he had no right to seek business in your territory, or are you going to match your wits and selling ability against his with the determination to out-general him, and not only

hold your own business, but get all you can from those customers that you usually look upon as his?

While it is a mistake to knock the competitor, it is an equal mistake to fear him or to hand business over to him that by legitimate means you can retain for your own house. Your competitor is not there primarily to drive you from the field, but to sell as much goods as possible in furtherance of his own interests and those of his house. Admire his fighting ability, if you will, but in your analysis plan some means of out-doing him in free conflict. Beneath it all there is the deeper question of salesmanship. How is it that your competitor has the ability to keep you from the trade that you can serve as well as he?

Do you think it will be worth while to study your competitor's methods so as to be able to hold your trade against his encroachments—to compete with his salesmanship as well as with his goods? This is a problem of your pre-approach.

Making Use of Competition

We have already suggested several ways by which a salesman can make use of competition. You can do so when your competitor has sold a prospect the idea and has paved the way for you to sell him the proposition. Also by observing how he sells his goods. In the end this may be one of the best uses you can make of your competitor.

In the following incident note carefully how the salesman made use of competition in his pre-approach.

Robert Shield was employed on one of the city papers as advertising salesman selling space to advertisers. He had followed the usual methods, such as that of noting the "ads" in other papers and calling upon the advertisers to solicit their patronage.

He became very restless, having but meagre success pursuing the worn-out method of presenting his card and telling the prospect the advantages of buying space in his paper. This brought comparatively little business, and there was a great disparity between the time and effort employed and the returns.

Shield had some initiative, so he determined to put it to use and to do more head-work and less foot-work.

A merchant had placed an "ad" in two papers. Bob, as they usually called the salesman, took one of these ads, reconstructed it, condensed it, changed the arrangement and saved about one-third of the space. He made it better and more effective. He then went to work on the other with the same result—a better "ad" and a third of the space saved. The next thing was to prepare a new "ad" that would occupy about the same amount of space he had saved on the other two. Upon this one he put his best efforts and made it the most effective of the three. He pasted the originals on a sheet of paper and beneath each placed his two substitutes, and beneath these his third "ad."

He called upon the merchant and said, "Mr. Brown, I want to see you regarding the two 'ads' you have been running." When he presented the sheet of paper the merchant recognized the printed copies. He asked Bob which of those papers he represented. Bob replied that he represented neither.

He now called Brown's attention to the substitutes, pointed out their merits and the fact that in each case a third of the space had been saved. After carefully examining them Brown admitted Bob's claims and became very much interested.

His attention was then called to the third "ad," the excellent character of which was at once easily seen. "This ad," said Bob, "will occupy about the same amount of space I have saved from the other two." "And what is the third 'ad' for?" asked Brown. "That is for my paper," Bob replied. "You see, Mr. Brown, you can run three 'ads' for about the same as the two cost you, and you get your product before thousands of people who read my paper who do not read the others."

That merchant's patronage was secured at once.

This was a new way of getting business by rendering actual service. Whenever Bob appeared in Brown's place the latter knew he was bringing to him some sort of service and was glad to see him.

This was making profitable use of competition, but it required a fine kind of pre-approach.

The average salesman is either lacking in initiative or is too lazy or too indifferent to put it to work. He would rather trot around all day handing out his card and making the same old dry-as-dust appeal. He sees other people getting the business, but it never once occurs to him how he can turn competition to account. He has no pre-approach.

Competition has its compensations.

It often proves you have the best goods on the market—a fact which increases your appreciation of your proposition.

It often specifies wherein your product is weak and defective and shows you how it can be improved.

It often indicates that you are a poor salesman, that your competitor is getting your trade, and that you need to analyze yourself, your methods, your goods, and your territory.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS

After reading the discussion of a subject do you have the habit of gathering it up and condensing it into a few leading points, or is it spread out over your mind in the form of a lot of particulars?

I. There are Five Things to Know in Understanding Business Conditions.

1. What was wrong with the methods of the salesman who went to a town with electrical products to find that no such lighting system had been installed?
2. When is a territory a closed territory?
3. How do unusual circumstances aid the salesman? What example was given?
4. How would you educate the merchant to buying a better quality of goods?
5. How does the "hard times" plea affect different salesmen?

II. To Deal with Competitive Conditions They Must be Known.

1. Give two reasons why the salesman should be well-informed on his competitor's goods?
2. When a competitor failed to sell your prospect his goods would that be to your advantage or disadvantage in trying to sell him a similar line?
3. You must compete with your competitor's goods, but there is another thing with which you must compete that is of the first importance. What is it?

4. There are three ways in which your competitor may improve your salesmanship. Can you state them?
5. Special attention was given to an instance in which a salesman was very clever in making use of competition. Do you recall the manner in which he put initiative to work?

PRACTICAL TALKS SERIES

THOROUGHNESS

PRACTICAL TALKS SERIES

THOROUGHNESS

A job half-done is an advertisement which reads—
"Service absolutely not guaranteed; you hire me at your own risk."
A job well done is its own recommendation.

WHEN you say you see "through" a thing you mean that you know it just as it is, that you understand it perfectly.

When you say, relative to something, "I have gone through the thing," you mean that nothing that pertains to it has escaped your notice.

It may not have occurred to you that the word "thoroughly" is another word for "throughly." Thoroughness is throughness. It means that you have covered the ground, have been exact, have omitted nothing.

You admire the man who, in any line, does a clean work. That street sweeper who has done his work so perfectly would be just as thorough if he were a salesman or anything else.

If you hired a man to do a piece of work and he made a bungling job of it you would make him put it right before you paid him and would never hire him again.

Your sales talk may be the same sort of thing, an unfinished piece of work. If your sales manager had "listened in" he would have classed you with the fellow who botched your job.

You would not take your watch to a blacksmith to be repaired. Fancy him using those delicate little tongs of his to insert a mainspring.

You cannot do your work with any old tools, or "any" kind of preparation.

You fumble the ball in making the approach but hope you can recover yourself and play the game when you get further along. You never mastered the approach. It masters you and you lose the game at the start.

A stumbling, halting, patched up approach does not create in the mind of the prospect the impression that you know your business.

Are you a master mechanic in handling the tools of your selling process? Does it make the prospect feel that he can put full confidence in you?

Did you ever watch an expert mechanic handle his tools? They seem to be a part of himself. Whether he drives a nail or runs his plane over a board he never misses a move. Put the same tools in the hands of a shoemaker and what a difference.

When you take your kit of tools into a sales talk do you fumble around for the right one only to find perhaps that it is not there? How often do you have to use a dull screwdriver for a fine piece of work in making a special appeal because you left the sharp chisel behind?

It is a bad time to be hunting around for tools after you go to work on the job.

Do a clean work on the field assigned you. Thoroughness means a systematic classification of every prospect of the community. Here is a man who skims what he calls the cream, sells the most likely prospects and leaves the town. The competitor comes along and finishes the job. That unfinished job robbed the house of the business that salesman was sent there to secure.

Your field represents so much business, and your house has a right to every dollar's worth that can be squeezed out of it.

Some salesmen do a very thorough work—they talk the proposition and the prospect to death. They make a "killing" all right and raise monuments to their valiant efforts, but they are tomb stones.

Perseverance is an element of thoroughness, but simply "hanging on" so as to "wear out" the prospect is the crudest kind of selling. Don't think that because you leave your prospect limp you are a great success.

"Well, I gave that fellow something to think about," says the salesman who compliments himself on scoring a victory in arguing with the prospect. The latter says, "I wonder what boob told that fellow he would make a salesman?"

It is the man who does not know how to do his work who tires himself out on the job. The expert does not seem to exert himself in the least, but the work grows under his hand as naturally as the flower comes to bloom.

Watch the thoroughgoing salesman. Note how every points falls in the right order; observe the conclusiveness of every argument; note the ease with which he meets every objection and leaves no rough edges; how easily he slides into the closing of the deal without any perceptible break to advertise what he is now doing; see how he gets the prospect's signature without asking for it.

How did he do it? Everything looked like an impromptu affair. It was nothing of the kind. Every move was thrashed out ahead of time. He had everything in hand before he met the prospect. His kit of selling tools was in

perfect order and he knew where to find the thing he wanted and when it was to be used.

Thoroughness is operating without exhibiting the wheels.

SELF-QUIZ

1. Do I make a careful analysis of all conditions surrounding a sale before making my presentation?
2. Do I determine whether or not business conditions in my territory are favorable or unfavorable for my product?
3. Do I find out if there is a reason why my product is especially adapted to a certain territory?
4. Do I put forth an extra effort to sell my product where the conditions in a territory seem more difficult than in another?
5. Instead of "passing up" a town because of the few sales I am able to make, do I endeavor to develop it for future sales?
6. Do I give competition proper value in order to show my customer the reason for buying my product?
7. Do I avoid knocking my competitor's product and negotiate in such a way that my customer will have full confidence in me?
8. Do I realize that conditions in my territory are constantly changing and that I must keep well informed on those changes?
9. Do I use initiative in putting my goods on the market?
10. Do I always truthfully present my goods to the best of my knowledge in order to instill confidence in my customer?

SECTION III

THE CUSTOMER AND THE PROPOSITION

THE CUSTOMER AND THE PROPOSITION

KNOWING THE CUSTOMER

Locating the Prospect.
Selling From Door to Door.
Home Office Leads.
Secured by advertising.
By mailing lists. Salesmen's reports.
Finding New Leads.
Developing your own leads.
Various sources of leads. Records, files, licenses, clubs.
Use of Customers.
The satisfied customer.
Using Your Wits.
Getting facts regarding prospect.

Cultivating the Prospect.
Winning friendship.
Cultivating the house buyer.
Seven points of importance.
Accomodating the Prospect.
Entering wedges to business.
Giving the prospect a lift, window display, etc.
Opportunities and how to use them.
Peculiarities of the Buyer.
Preventing versus overcoming friction.
Wide range of peculiarities.
Some ridiculous, all to be be regarded.

HANDLING THE PROPOSITION

Familiarity With All Known Facts.
Knowledge prior to selling
Ignorance creates hesitatancy or exaggeration.
Analysis and Use of Proposition.
Nature of analysis. Every merit a talking point.
Leading Interest of the Prospect.
What your prospect wants to buy.

Interesting the Prospect in Spite of Himself.
The hard types. They can be sold.
Disadvantages of Not Buying.
Necessary to emphasize losses.
Creating a Place for Your Goods.
Creating a demand. How to empty the shelves.
A demonstration of products.

SECTION III

THE CUSTOMER AND THE PROPOSITION

YOU have much to do before you meet the prospect and present your proposition. You must know how to find him and how to deal with him after you have found him. It is one thing to know the facts of the proposition but quite another thing to bring the prospect and the proposition together.

KNOWING THE CUSTOMER

Pre-approach with reference to dealing with the customer suggests four things of special importance:

Locating the Customer.

Cultivating the Customer.

Accommodating the Customer.

Studying the Customer.

In your pre-approach you are to get in touch with prospects to make them your customers. How is this to be effected so as to build up the strongest possible trade and to secure permanently profitable patronage?

Locating the Prospect

The man who is selling from door to door requires practically no pre-approach in this matter of locating the customer. The problems of pre-approach do not arise. Every home or office is a prospective buyer. How to work the whole territory in the most expeditious and profitable manner is his only problem. He can usually gather the necessary information about the next prospect from the customer he has just sold.

Home Office Leads

The salesman knows in a general way the class of persons who can make use of his proposition. The particular person of this class to whom he is directed is a "lead."

In various ways the house places in his hands the names of persons who may be more or less acquainted with the proposition. These leads may be secured through advertisements used to awaken interest and bring about an inquiry. This system of advertising is in itself a skillful piece of salesmanship. The advertiser must know his line and the angles from which to present it so as to catch the interest of the reader. When the inquiry comes to the house it becomes a lead. Frequently the inquiry is answered by a letter stating that a representative will call. This method is a prolific source of leads and is commonly used in securing interviews.

Again, leads are secured through mailing lists obtained from various sources, and the inquiries are placed in the hands of the salesman.

They are also secured through the reports of former salesmen. These reports contain the facts relative to individuals or firms interviewed but not sold. A salesman working this territory at a later time finds these records very useful. They give the history of previous attempts to sell the prospects and the conditions existing at that time.

Finding New Leads

A good salesman also develops his own leads. He may gather them from city or telephone directories or from similar sources. Some of these may give him little more than names, but in working his territory he may find them very useful.

The salesman has access to the records of the court, newspaper files, lists of tax payers, automobile licenses, club and association members, and many other sources of information, depending on the nature of the product and the salesman's ability to investigate. The record of marriage licenses informs the salesman of new families established in the community to which his proposition might make a special appeal.

From such sources he can learn of new circumstances into which people have come that would permit them to consider a proposition which, under former conditions, would have received no attention.

Use of Customers

Locating the customer through satisfied users is one of the most reliable methods. These are among the best leads a salesman can have. The satisfied customer is your best helper. He is the most convincing proof of the merits of your goods. When properly served and satisfied, he becomes an authority to whom you can refer.

You will not only get from this customer the name of a new prospect but also a "line" on him. He can often give you information of a particular nature regarding the prospect's circumstances and peculiarities. This knowledge may be the very key to the situation, and will be particularly helpful when he does not wish you to use his name.

Many salesmen develop most of their leads from this source. They reduce the use of such leads to a science. They know the value of the name back of the introduction. When agreeable to the customer, an accompanying letter introducing and commending you and your goods is a big aid and should be used effectively.

Using Your Wits

A salesman is selling cash registers. To get a line on prospects he spends two or three days a week going from one store to another, making petty purchases so as to note the merchants' methods of handling cash, charge, and C. O. D. sales, asking questions of the clerks, and talking incognito with the proprietor himself. His object is to ascertain the business methods and conditions in the store and to locate any weak points.

With this information he goes to his office and lays out a plan that will save the merchant's time and that of his clerks, stop store leaks, and insure the lasting confidence and good will of his trade.

There is no guess-work about it; he can speak to the point from personal knowledge of the merchant's wants. He can go so far as to give specific instances in which losses have occurred and customers have gone away in anger.

This salesman is working his pre-approach in a very practical way. He is using his wits.

Cultivating the Prospect

Certain lines afford the salesman considerable opportunity of becoming well acquainted with the prospect before actually doing business with him. He forms an attachment through his hobby or some other form of interest. The greeting becomes less formal and more cordial. The growing friendship expresses itself in the grip of the hand, and the smile becomes more genial and natural. The strain wears off.

Respect and friendship are sometimes won in the prospect's home. The ties become stronger. A real intimacy develops. The more genuine the friendship bcomes on both sides, the more profitable it will be for both—the salesman

will get his friend's business and he will render him a real service.

In establishing this friendship the salesman will be careful not to introduce business interests too soon. That would change the color of things. The prospect would be liable to see that the effort to gain his friendship is for a business purpose, and then a sale would be impossible.

Some propositions allow the salesman considerable time for developing friendly relations. During this time—on the golf links or while engaged in other forms of amusement—the salesman may divert conversation from business channels or make it appear that his interest in the prospect is more personal than a business interest.

If your approach is to be made through the channel of friendship, keep the issues clear. The temptation is to get down to business too soon and thus spoil everything. This particular friendship may involve a great deal in that community. It may open the doors for much business that would not require the same length of time, or any time, in developing the friendship of other prospects. Every care should be taken in selecting the prospect with this end in view.

A social contact with the purchasing agent is sometimes the easiest approach to the establishment. It may be the only accessible means. In cultivating the friendship of the house buyer the following points should be kept in mind.

1. Select the most favorable time and conditions to start the acquaintance.
2. Do not be obtrusive. Do not rush it, but do not let it get cold.
3. Discover the prospect's personal interests, and enter into them in a hearty and not a perfunctory manner.

4. Gain his respect and confidence and strengthen them, if possible, by getting into his home.
5. Do not introduce business matters too soon, and until the time is ripe avoid any reference to your line.
6. After getting his business let the friendship be none the less warm and genuine.
7. One such friendship may introduce you to a large amount of business.

Accommodating the Prospect

A good salesman will not overlook the opportunity to accommodate the prospect. There are many ways in which this may be done.

A drug salesman, handling an unusual and expensive proposition, made the acquaintance of a prominent druggist in one of the cities of his territory. The man was making a re-arrangement of the stock on his shelves. His method of classifying the items was defective. The salesman expressed a real interest in the matter, made a few suggestions the value of which the prospect appreciated and indicated he would be glad to come to the store that evening to assist him. He did so and in the end added his own valuable proposition to the shelves of that store.

A salesman noticed that the window display of a merchant whose patronage he wanted was weak from a sales-pulling standpoint. In the most tactful manner he made a few suggestions. These opened the way for other suggestions. He so improved the whole appearance of things that he was soon selling the merchant his entire line. His helpful suggestions did not cease with the getting of the business.

These are entering wedges to business opportunities.

In other ways a salesman may be able to favór the prospect in a manner which opens the way for commercial relations. He keeps on the alert to see opportunities for rendering a service. Even small kindnesses do not escape the buyer, particularly when they appear to be wholly disinterested.

In the wide range of his connections in the field the salesman has excellent opportunities to note profitable ideas and methods which he can pass on to his prospects and thus gain their appreciation and good will.

Peculiarities of the Buyer

One of the first laws of selling is that it is easier to prevent friction than to overcome it. It is just as easy to rub the fur the right way as the wrong way when we know how it ought to be rubbed.

A salesman learned that it always irritated a certain buyer when any other than a cash payment was suggested. In closing deals with this man he considered this peculiarity and thus safeguarded the sale.

Peculiarities have a wide range. Some of them may appear ridiculous and nonsensical. Some may cause considerable inconvenience to the salesman. But they must be religiously respected and handled, not as peculiarities, but as the natural rights of the buyer. Be careful not to notice the peculiarity, but treat it as quite usual.

A salesman who was never punctual in meeting appointments arranged an interview with a man who had extreme ideas about punctuality. At times he was even unreasonable. The salesman was half an hour late. The prospect

said, "People I do business with are on time; I do not care to consider your proposition."

A special trip to a disgruntled buyer will often clear away a difficulty that no amount of correspondence would effect. To go out of your way to see him softens his feelings toward you. He not only appreciates such consideration, but may regret that you went to so much trouble. That attitude of mind insures harmonious dealings.

These four things, then, are essenial in your pre-approach relative to the prospect: getting the leads, cultivating the prospect, accommodating the prospect, discovering and handling the prospect's peculiarities.

HANDLING THE PROPOSITION

There are various ways of selling: one man attempts to make the sale wholly through the customer; the other, wholly through the proposition. Both are partial and, therefore, defective methods.

The thing to be sold is the proposition; with this fact in mind, everything that has been said pertaining to the prospect must be carefully considered. The two must be kept in balance. We cannot over-estimate the importance of this section of our study. Six things claim the salesman's attention.

Familiarity with All Known Facts

You are well aware of the common error of over-talking the proposition. Did that ever suggest to you that it might be better for the salesman not to know much about his goods, so that he would not talk too much?

That idea is all wrong. You cannot correct one error by creating another. The thing to do is to stop doing the wrong thing. The man who talks too much would do that

very thing if he knew little about his goods; he would talk too much about something else.

Know everything to be known about the line before attempting to sell it. This is an important law that all true salesmanship recognizes. The salesman who obeys this law comes to the prospect with confidence, and that is one-half of the sale. The other man comes with fear and trembling. He is afraid of the questions that will be asked and begins to speculate on how well he can guess or bluff his way through.

If you are uninformed about your goods and are not a success at guessing or bluffing, questions will be answered by a series of "I don't know." Ignorance never sold a proposition. The prospect soon becomes disgusted with this type of salesman.

The salesman who does not know his goods cannot long disguise the fact. The prospect soon detects hesitancy or exaggeration. The man who cannot represent his proposition invariably misrepresents it. If he makes a sale and the misrepresentation is discovered, trouble begins; the house loses a customer and the salesman his job.

It is the function of the pre-approach to know the facts. To start a sale without such knowledge is not to know what you are selling. Let a doctor proceed on that basis in treating a patient, or a lawyer in handling a case, and how long will it take to put him out of commission? Salesmanship is no exception. Make no mistake about this. Your success depends upon your knowledge, not your ignorance, of your line.

Analysis and Uses of the Proposition

Knowing your goods implies your ability to analyze them.

Analysis is the process of resolving a thing into its elements. It is taking a thing apart for the purpose of examining the parts. When we know the parts we know the thing as a whole. Analysis also signifies the ability to separate the elements in an effective manner and to set forth the inter-relation of the parts. The merits of the proposition are distributed throughout the various features.

You are an automobile salesman. You know you have a good car, but your prospect does not know it. He knows that the goodness of the thing lies in its materials and mechanism. He insists upon seeing how it is put together. Your ability to describe that clearly depends upon your ability mentally to take it apart and show all the parts in their right relation.

A proposition is of value according to its usefulness.

An automobile is useful because it can take you where you want to go; but to do that every part of the machine must function properly. The thing as a whole is a structure dependent upon the perfection of every part. The prospect wants to know that it will not have the trick of stalling on a railroad track.

All of this is especially important in handling a proposition that includes many particulars. This analysis should not omit one thing vital to the uses for which the article was made.

Every point of merit is a talking point. The salesman must be so thoroughly familiar with all of these that when he comes to the prospect he will not be guilty of making damaging omissions. If you were selling a lawn mower to one who knew little or nothing about the mechanism of the machine, and you had no systematic method of exhibiting the parts, the likelihood is that you would omit some

important particulars. When the buyer came to use the machine he might be put to considerable annoyance through not knowing how to operate what you omitted to show.

Pre-approach requires that the salesman know just how the merits of the product will be exhibited.

Finding the Leading Interest of the Prospect

There are certain things about a proposition that create a general interest; there are particular things that appeal to different classes of people. As the salesman makes his analysis the proposition must be made to fit these different interests.

For example, one man buys a pair of shoes wholly for the purpose of wear and utility; a plain heavy shoe will appeal to him. Another man sees in a pair of shoes a certain adornment. If too much stress is laid upon the style and finish in selling the first customer, you might lose the sale. You failed to ascertain his main interest in a shoe, and your proposition, because you present it from the wrong point of view, makes practically no appeal.

You are selling the prospect, not yourself. The salesman frequently makes the mistake of talking up some point of his goods upon which he himself is especially sold, but which is not a feature of like interest to all people. He cannot understand why every one should not be equally sold on that merit. He gives so much attention to it, and pays so little attention to other appeals the proposition is capable of making, that he makes few sales.

Study the needs of your prospect in advance and sell your product from the standpoint of his interests.

Note all the different advantages of the product that various classes would want to buy. Line up these interests

with the corresponding appeals. This is one of the basic laws of selling.

Interesting the Prospect in Spite of Himself

You have heard people say, "If I don't want a thing the salesman is not born that could sell me." A farmer, seeing a giraffe for the first time, exclaimed, "Gosh, there ain't no such animal." There is no such prospect as the man who cannot be sold. Such people every day are sold the things they did not want and had no intention of buying. Here is a man who thinks he is proof against the stock salesman. But a salesman crosses his path and influences him in a way that had never before been done. His prejudices begin to melt.

He always looked upon an investment as a risk he could never be induced to take. The salesman makes it clear to him that he is the one who is taking the biggest risk in taking no risk. He is risking losing all the gains of a sound investment and may die penniless. There is a point in his life where his earning power grows less each year. The future cannot take care of itself, and he will find himself a pensioner on the bounty of others.

In your pre-approach connected with your analysis of the goods and the customer, you will match appeals with indifference, arguments with opposition, and when you meet prospects of this and that order you will know just what to do.

The Disadvantage of Not Buying

The disadvantage of not buying is simply the reverse of the advantage of buying. A proper presentation of gains is a setting forth of the losses in not acquiring the gains. While the two situations are but the two sides of the one thing, it becomes necessary to emphasize the losses. It

frequently happens that people who can pass up an advantage will pause to consider when a real loss is skillfully set forth.

The preacher at times, finding he cannot move people with the attractions of heaven, succeeds in putting the fear of God into them by giving them the Gospel picture of Dives lifting up his eyes in hell.

There is a direct loss in not taking advantage of the benefits a proposition may confer. Thus the salesman in his pre-approach will set down the things that will be a loss to the prospect if he refuses to buy.

At some point in the sale the prospect may say, "I will take your card and send for it a little later." What would you do in this case? What percentage of people who have been given cards and literature ever sent for the article? In your pre-approach you will plan to overcome this. See the volume on the "Approach" for further suggestions.

Creating a Place for Your Goods

When the card-index for hotel use was a new device, a salesman handling the index stood by the desk of a hotel and watched the clerk as he referred from time to time to his list of guests. In a casual way he remarked to him what an advantage it would be if he could have his guests listed and indexed before him so he could catch at a glance the name he wanted and how much time and unnecessary work it would save. The clerk admitted that it would be a fine thing.

The following day a salesman approached this clerk with a card-index. The clerk said, "This is a peculiar coincidence; it was only yesterday that a man and I were speaking of this sort of thing and the advantage it would have

over our present system." The card-index was brought before the management, backed up by a strong recommendation from the clerk, and installed.

You come to the dealer and find him stocked up. Let us assume that you are not prepared for that emergency. You will look upon it as a hopeless case. The shelves are full; there is no room for your goods. This is a problem for your pre-approach to solve. You will not solve it on the spur of the moment as you meet the dealer. In that situation it would be a hopeless case.

How are you going to create a place for your goods? It is not a simple matter; you must put every particle of your initiative and mental resources to work. The problem may resolve itself into a quick turn-over of his present stock. He may be overstocked, or the products may be slow sellers.

Many dealers are not good buyers. If you can show your prospect how to dispose of his goods, you will have no difficulty in making a place for your own. He may know of but one way of disposing of his goods—to sell them as they are called for by his trade.

You can be of great service to this dealer in working out a plan for a quick turn-over. People are out for bargains; the saving appeal is strong with the average individual. They will walk a block farther to save a cent on an article. You may show the merchant how he can mark down his goods without giving the impression of inferiority. Thus it may be a special sale or a new plan of advertising that creates a place for your goods.

A radio salesman has a similar problem in selling. For example, he is selling a set with the most modern improvements and with much more simplified equipment than the old. In many instances this is arranged by offering to take

the old set off his hands and allowing a certain amount to be credited to him on the new.

If your product is new and has outstanding merits or features, and the dealer sees that it would be a profitable seller, there is little difficulty in making the sale. He can well afford to sell off the old stock at a reduction, if necessary, in order to make a place for it. It is a different situation when he is well stocked with goods for which he has a steady sale. In your pre-approach you will place yourself in his position and say, "What would induce me to buy these goods?" This takes you back to the question of "Human Needs" and buying motives.

You may arrange with him to make a demonstration of a certain product in the store. If a food product, it is prepared and served in a tempting manner, and people who come into the store are induced to sample it. It creates a demand which the dealer supplies. This is often an entering wedge for the introduction of other goods.

You must be so strongly sold on your proposition that you will not be affected by the negative attitude of the prospect. Such attitudes have a discouraging effect. Just now your great concern is, not how others may regard your goods, but how they will regard them when you have finished your story.

Have a passion for the merits of your proposition. Let your confidence be so genuine and deeply-seated that it will compel attention and stimulate a corresponding faith on the part of the prospect. Be completely sold on your proposition before you attempt to make a sale. If it does not affect you that way, abandon it and get one that does. Again it is a matter of the right mental attitude. Keep yourself so enthusiastic about your proposition that you are restless until you have a chance to demonstrate it.

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS

Did you ever adopt the following practical method of testing the accuracy of your reading? After reading a page or more, close the book and jot down the main points of what you read.

I. Knowing the Customer Involves Three Things.

1. He must first be located. How does the house secure leads for the salesman?
2. If you were developing your own leads upon what sources would you rely?
3. Who in particular can be of great service to you in referring you to prospects?
4. What simple method may be adopted in getting a line on the methods and conditions of a store?
5. In cultivating the prospect's friendship the temptation is to get down to business too soon. How should the salesman guard this point?
6. State two ways in which the salesman may accommodate the prospect.

II. The Next Thing is the Handling of the Proposition.

1. Is it a good thing not to know too much about the proposition so as not to talk too much about it?
2. How does ignorance of the proposition affect the salesman?
3. The proposition must be carefully analyzed. What is analysis?
4. How did the card index salesman in his pre-approach create a place for his goods?
4. If more goods are to be bought the dealer must dispose of his present stock. How can you suggest a quick turnover?

PRACTICAL TALKS SERIES

MODESTY

PRACTICAL TALKS SERIES

MODESTY

ONE may lay so much claim to modesty as to be absolutely conceited?

A religious sect, some years ago, started a crusade against pride in matters of dress and personal appearance. Their own mode of dressing was a *severe* protest. They had so much pride in having none that they had more pride than the best dressed people in the community.

Modesty is fine until you make it a point to call attention to it.

Just what is this quality?

Some one says, modesty is that quality that keeps a man from talking about himself. If that be true what an egotist was the Apostle Paul. He declared he labored more abundantly than did all the other apostles. And yet we never thought of accusing him of immodesty.

No one ever charged Christ with immodesty and yet He made declarations regarding himself that the most presumptuous man would not think of making: that He was the light of the world, etc.

It makes some difference what one says and the significance and occasion of saying it.

The pretentious and ostentatious man would scarcely be held up as an example of modesty.

There is nothing that so effectually hides a good proposition from the prospect as when the egotistical salesman gets in front of it and calls attention to himself.

Do not be deceived in supposing that a person is necessarily modest who belittles or under-rates himself. People

sometimes do that just to have you tell them how mistaken they are and to extol their perfections.

A false modesty is, many times, the worst form of conceit. You will invariably find it is a real pretentiousness.

"The most virtuous of all men," said Plato, "is he that contents himself with being virtuous without seeking to appear so."

There are times when it is necessary that a man should tell the truth regarding himself and what he has accomplished that under other circumstances would be downright immodest.

The man who is given to blowing his own horn is afraid that the age in which he lives will fail to realize what a great man it possessed.

It was rather unfortunate that you painted such a lurid picture of your past selling experience in getting on the new sales force since your present record is such a drab affair.

"I never like to push myself forward," says a very "shy" fellow. But he will work all the ropes to get some one to give him a push into the limelight.

To do your best work is commendable, but an invidious comparison with another man who is less fortunate will stamp you as an intolerable egotist.

The truly modest man is glad to express his appreciation of another man's success provided the latter does not beat him to it by advertising the fact.

When you sold your services to your new employer it was not in the least immodest for you to say you were satisfied you could sell his proposition. Modesty is perfectly consistent with a well-grounded belief in your abil-

ities. But when that other applicant wished to appear very modest and unassuming and could say nothing for himself he was rejected. The employer wisely concluded that the man who cannot sell his service will not be able to sell the goods.

A modesty that kills ambition, that keeps you from forging ahead, that stultifies aspiration, that holds you in the background, that prevents you taking your rightful place or rising to the heights, is a misnomer. You are calling something else by the wrong name. If you will examine it carefully you will find that instead of it being modesty it is a species of non-entity, imbecility.

In striving to avoid egotism don't go to the other extreme and kill individuality.

Do not display your *modesty* because immodesty is display.

SELF-QUIZ

1. Do I make good use of home office leads in finding customers?
2. Do I make use of all possible methods for locating my prospects?
3. Do I show such an interest in my prospect as to create confidence and make room for future development in his business?
4. Do I accommodate my prospect whenever possible?
5. Do I familiarize myself with all facts concerning my proposition, also my competitor's?
6. Do I avoid over-talking my proposition?
7. Do I know what particular thing interests my prospect in my proposition and do I sell him on that interest?

8. Do I keep myself constantly sold on my proposition?
9. Do I assume a positive attitude toward my sale in order to get positive results?
10. Do I retain the friendship of my customers even though their business is assured?

SECTION IV

PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF PRE-APPROACH

PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF THE PRE-APPROACH

HOW A FIRM ANALYZED THE MARKET

Market Analysis for New Product.

- First—To educate the public, the jobbers, the dealers.
- Second—To change peoples' habits and create demand.
- Third—To get the public to accept a new idea.
- Fourth—To overcome prejudice.
- Fifth—To recognize certain values.

Backing Up the Analysis.

- By advertising.
  - Character, form, place.
- By the representative.
  - Following the advertising.

Analyzing for Other Products.

A SALES MANAGER'S METHODS

Analyzing the Territory.

- Area, population, wealth, taxation, crops, manufacturers.

Co-operating With the Salesman

- Selection of salesmen.
- Instruction of salesmen.

Equipping Salesmen.

- Showing the dealer where product could be sold.
- Where profit could be made.
- Equipment—state book, map, charts, plans.

A SALESMAN'S PROBLEM OF A SALE

A List of Facts Concerning the Market.

- The sales for a year in a district.
- Population of the district.
- Number of families.
- Income of tax returns.
- Number of renewals.

A list of Items Regarding Resales.

- Outline of campaign with cost.
- Advertising.
- Mail program—Cost, schedule, items.
- The use of a salesman.

SECTION IV

PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF PRE-APPROACH

IN THE preceding sections of this volume we have discussed the general elements of the pre-approach. Now let us see how they operate in the hands of the Firm, the Sales Manager, and the Salesman.

The firm makes a survey of the market in its entirety from an executive standpoint, not only before beginning sales operations, but continues to keep its analysis up-to-date as business conditions change.

The sales manager plans his campaign in advance by equipping the salesmen to meet the resistance expected, and arranging for the proper advertising assistance.

The salesman has the problem of analyzing the immediate sale before he approaches the prospect.

Instances of the practical application of the elements of pre-approach will be taken up under the following subjects.

1. How a firm analyzed the market.
2. How a sales manager planned his selling methods.
3. How a salesman studied the problem of a particular sale.

HOW A FIRM ANALYZED THE MARKET

Market Analysis for New Product

A company manufacturing a paper product wished to put a paper towel on the market. They found that they were confronted with the proposition of introducing to the pub-

lic a new kind of product. Also that this proposition consisted of the following five problems.

First: To educate:

A. The Public.

B. The Jobbers.

C. The Dealers.

Second: To change people's habits and create a demand for the goods.

Third: To get the public to accept a new idea and ask for the product.

Fourth: To overcome prejudice and convert the public, thereby establishing a market.

Fifth: To recognize and influence certain psychological evaluations of the public mind, as follows:

A. *They had to modify the user's valuation.* That is, they had to show the advantage of a paper towel over a cloth towel, and make it so attractive to the public that they considered it better than cloth.

B. *They had to modify the user's buying habits.* Heretofore his wife had always gone to the dry goods store, bought so much toweling, and made it up into towels, and this habit had to be changed to the purchase of rolls of tissue paper towels at Drug Stores and places where it is sold.

C. *They had to modify or change the prospect's using habits.* That is, their problem was to get him to use a paper towel whenever he wanted to dry his hands—to change his habits to the point where he instinctively preferred a paper towel to a cloth one.

Backing Up the Analysis

With these five problems clearly defined they saw just what it was they had to accomplish. The next step was to find out how to do it, or in other words, to find methods, ways, means, or devices for accomplishing these purposes.

They employed two outstanding methods in selling their product to the public; advertising, and having representatives call.

Advertising

The advertising consisted of an extensive campaign in leading periodicals with a National circulation. In all this advertising they emphasized the fact that their towels "absorbed the moisture." That was the thought, the idea that they attempted to drive home, that they wanted the public to accept.

Some of the features of their advertising copy were:

1. It was plain, simple, instructive, informative, and made effective through illustrations and pictured demonstrations.
2. In presenting their arguments they used such expressions as:
   A. "Use like a blotter."
   B. "Gives the pleasant 'paper tissue feel'."
   C. "Towel economy."
3. In addition to their regular advertising they ran copy in national magazines in conjunction with Public Health Campaigns waged by cities.

Call by Representatives

After the missionary work had been done by the advertising they had representatives call to sell the jobbers. As

a matter of record this advertising proved very efficient as an aid in creating a large volume of sales.

Analyzing for Other Products

The foregoing cannot be used as a hard and fast rule, nor an exact method of analyzing all sales problems. At the same time it shows the possibility of studying and analyzing the selling problem, together with some of the devices which are available for accomplishing the desired results.

This system may be applied with equal success to any one of the following cases or kinds of situations which present themselves to business managers.

1. To introduce a new product of a kind already in use, i. e., a new make of automobile.
2. To introduce a new product—the first of its kind, as in the paper towel case just analyzed.
3. To secure repeat business, e. g., bearings, bushings, and parts for manufacturers of machinery.
4. Extending the market, such as yeast being introduced for other purposes than making bread.
5. To overcome prejudice, such as the antagonism against public utility companies.
6. To regain a lost market—illustrated by the attempts of bicycle manufacturers to re-popularize the bicycle riding fad.
7. To unload overstock, soiled goods, or goods out of style.
8. To introduce a new product of a highly standardized nature—such as soap.

9. To introduce a new product when it is a specialty, as some fancy new auto accessory.

An analysis of the selling job facing the board of directors will fall into one or more of the preceding classifications. The ways and means employed to market the product in each case will depend upon the nature of the product and business conditions in general.

HOW A SALES MANAGER PLANNED HIS METHODS

The sales manager has his problem of pre-approach and he must plan his selling methods in advance in much the same manner as do the firm and the salesman. An instance follows of the problem facing one sales manager, and the methods he used to work them out.

First he analyzed his territory, second, he organized a plan of co-operation with his salesmen and third, he equipped his salesmen to analyze the dealers' territory for them and show the dealer where and how he could make money.

Analyzing the Territory

They decided to put on an intensive campaign in zone seven because it consisted of the advantages and facts named below:

8% of the area of the United States.

18% of the population of the United States.

20% of the wealth of the United States.

18% of the Income Tax of the United States.

18% of the crops in the United States.

22% of all manufacturers of the United States.

22% of all automobiles of the United States.

Co-operating with the Salesmen

A. To begin with, he selected salesmen carefully and came to a thorough understanding with them. They are the men on the firing line—the men who take the knocks and he considered them diamonds in the rough and attempted to bring out their finer qualities.

B. He worked with the salesmen and showed them how much it cost the house for every call they made and the necessity of making every effort to complete a sale. He taught them the need of keeping the cost of traveling in relation to the number of calls made, down to the minimum. He assured them that they were working for a good house, and that the managers were with them, and that the order they sold would be well taken care of.

C. When a salesman began to slip the manager did not condemn him, give him a lecture or call him down, but went in the territory and worked out the salesman's problems with him. He found this a very successful method and that it pulled the salesmen out of the rut and also gave the sales manager and the firm a better knowledge of the territory and a closer personal touch with the customers.

D. In the weekly sales meetings which he held on Saturday afternoon he encouraged the salesmen to exchange ideas on solving their problems. Every failure was analyzed to find out just why the salesmen did not get the order, and the salesman was shown how he could turn the failure into success.

Equipping His Salesmen

The salesmen were equipped with bullet proof data to open up new avenues for the dealer and show him exactly

where the product could be sold, and where the profit could be made. The equipment consisted of the following material.

A. A state book which showed certain facts about the dealer's territory by counties.

B. A map of each county was cut out and placed on a sheet which also contained these facts:

1. Population.
2. Number of families.
3. Annual renewal of purchasers.
4. Selling plan for dealers.
5. Advertising plan for the dealer which included:

Fence signs.
Bill boards.
Window trims.
Pictures.
Moving picture slides.
Printed ads.
Road signs.

The idea here was to help the dealer move the manufacturer's products. These forms of advertising make the public think of the article and of the store at the same time.

C. Charts and diagrams of the entire plan of the proposition for the dealer which also showed how to move the product and make a profit. This chart with the county sheet visualized the situation for the dealer who is very apt to buy when he sees an outlet for the goods.

D. Plans for educating the retail salesman employed by the dealer. The manufacturer's salesmen establishes contact with the dealer's employees in this manner:

1. He gets the name and address of each retail salesman.
2. He keeps in constant touch with him.
3. Discusses the line and explains it fully. Fires him with interest and enthusiasm for the manufacturer's product.
4. After the store closes he inspires the employee to sell the product through strong personal development such as calling at prospect's home after business hours.

The selling methods just explained were those used by a sales manager to market a large household article which was sold to the dealer who in turn resold them for a profit. The sales manager not only formulated a plan of resale for the dealer, but visualized the plan in the form of charts, diagrams, maps, using also State and County maps and actual figures to assist the salesman in selling the prospect.

The purpose here was two-fold. First, to give the salesman a clear understanding of his proposition, and second, to equip him with material for visualizing the proposition clearly to the dealer and giving him facts and figures which proved the extent of the market and the possibilities of resale of the product in that territory. This gave the salesman a thorough analysis of the customer's possibilities and the amount of goods he could use before the salesman ever approached him.

This method of pre-approach and analysis of the customer and his proposition may well be applied with success and profit to almost any kind of proposition which is sold to dealers for resale at a profit.

HOW A SALESMAN STUDIED THE PROBLEM OF A PARTICULAR SALE

A very successful salesman selling a well advertised product to dealers for resale studied the problem of each sale and worked out a system which could be applied with variations to all of his prospects. This system consisted mainly in finding out certain facts and listing the actual figures before approaching the prospect. In other words, the salesman put in some intensive study on the pre-approach.

He found, first of all, that few dealers had any real idea of the sales possibilities of his product in their city, County, or district; nor did they realize what the Company's advertising was doing for them in their territory, nor how to make use of this advertising to increase sales.

In order to overcome this lack of knowledge the salesman carefully prepared two written lists. One of facts about the market, and another of a definite, well organized plan for reselling the product.

A. The first list—the list of facts about the market contained the following items:

1. *Amount of sales for the past year in the district, in definite figures.* This figure was estimated by interviewing the local newspaper, banks, Chambers of Commerce, dealers, competitors, County recorders, and all persons who might have the necessary information. The actual amount of sales usually is much greater by several times the amount of the dealer's guess.
2. Population of the town, County and district.
3. Number of families.
4. Number of Income Tax Returns.

5. *Total circulation of all periodicals* in dealers's district in which the Company advertised the product. These figures were furnished by the Company's advertising department. The purpose was to show the dealer the national magazines, newspapers, trade journals and other periodicals which were presenting this article to the consumer, and paving the way to sales, if the dealer would just take advantage of the opportunity.

6. *The number of renewals.* That is, the rate at which the product is replaced by a new one by the consumers, figured to show the approximate number of renewals that will be made in the ensuing period or year.

7. Any public events, happenings, or new laws or government that will effect an increase in the use of the product.

B. The second list contained the items which the salesman wanted to present to the prospect in outlining a resale program.

1. Outline of campaign with cost. This consisted of presenting the dealer with certain advertisements to run and the cost to publish them. The salesman first obtained the rates from the local newspaper, figured out the exact cost to the dealer, and wrote them out on a sheet of paper which he left with the dealer.

2. He also set down on the same sheet the complete schedule for the advertisements, so timed as to cooperate with the advertisements run by the Company. He wrote down the number of ads, together with exact date each was to be run.

3. Mail Program—cost, schedule, items. In cases where it would be more expedient for the dealer to use direct mail, a campaign including the cost, the schedule of operation, and the items, was written out in detail for the dealer. The mailing pieces consisted of circulars, letters, folders, samples, or advertising specialties.

4. In case it would be advisable for the dealer to hire a salesman especially for this work, the representative equipped himself with the following facts:
   A. The cost of hiring such a man.
   B. The results to be expected from his work.
   C. The experience other dealers have had who do the same kind of work.
   D. Estimated value of such a plan.

5. Telephone Campaign. In some cases it might be profitable to supplement the other plans with a telephone campaign. If this was decided upon the salesman requested the dealer to designate a member of his force to do the telephoning and then instructed the employee as to the best way to carry on the work, explaining the kinds of people to be called, such as home owners, builders, carpenters, architects, decorators, contractors, etc.

It would not be possible to get every dealer to inaugurate all of these plans, but the salesman was prepared to offer such helps and suggestions as the prospect might need. When a dealer consented to try one or more of these plans he was furnished with a written copy of the program containing the cost of it in actual figures, and a schedule so that he could follow it with very little effort. This sales-

man not only analyzed his immediate sale in advance but paved the way for future sales by assisting the dealer in disposing of the goods at a profit.

The salesman attempted to keep the dealer up to the mark in following up the program by writing him regularly for results, and checking up on his activities when he called.

This plan of studying the pre-approach is so general and comprehensive that it may well be applied to almost any proposition sold to dealers for resale.

The matter of turn-over or resale will be treated more completely in the volume "Safe Guarding the House."

SUGGESTIVE QUESTIONS

Are you inclined to accept as true whatever you read, or do you critically analyze what you read? An openness of mind is the right attitude, but that does not require that you do not do your own thinking.

I. How a Firm Analyzed the Market.

1. Such an analysis for a new product required several things. Among other problems, in what way was it necessary to change the habits of people?
2. What arguments were used for selling the paper towel?
3. What two points were made in advertising in getting the goods before the public?
4. How can these principles be applied to any other product?

II. How a Sales Manager Planned his Methods.

1. In planning a campaign in a certain zone what were some of the things that that zone contained that it was necessary to know?
2. In what four ways did he cooperate with his sales force?
3. How can the salesman pave the way for doing business with the dealer through the retail salesman?

III. How a Salesman Studied the Problem of a Particular Sale.

1. How did he inform the prospect concerning the amount of business done in his territory? What were some of these facts?
2. What were some of the provisions in setting forth a resale program?

PRACTICAL TALKS SERIES

CONFIDENCE

PRACTICAL TALKS SERIES

CONFIDENCE

It makes some difference in what it is you believe—
Spend your time believing doubts and soon
You will have faith in nothing.

THE great men of the world have been great believers, not great doubters.

Belief is positive, doubt is negative.

According to which of these is your dominant trait so you will be and so you will act.

One of the greatest things in the world to have confidence in, is *yourself*. Cicero said, "Confidence is that feeling by which the mind embarks in great and honorable courses with a sure hope and trust in itself."

There is nothing many people are so afraid of as themselves. They have made so many failures they no longer trust themselves.

When you started into the building to sell the "big man," and your heart was playing a tat-too on your ribs, you thought you were afraid of your man. All wrong; you were simply afraid of yourself.

When this keystone of the arch of your life and your hopes falls out, depend upon it something is going to drop.

That you know you are the greatest thing that ever happened is not confidence but abounding conceit.

Confidence is the assurance that what has been done can be done by you up to the point of your ability. In selling your services to a house make such a statement

and it will take you on. But if you say, "I don't know whether or not I can sell your proposition, but you can try me out," and then ask for a drawing account, how much do you suppose that house will invest in your lack of confidence? Its sales force is burdened with too many doubts.

There is more unused power than there is power in use. Why? Because you never believed you had it.

When you went in to sell that prospect you didn't expect to do it. The result was that your unbelief tripped you up and curtailed your selling ability. You did not sell yourself, and, of course, you did not sell the goods.

Discover the possibilities in yourself. Confidence is the pick that turns up the hidden wealth of your being.

Don't expect people to go prospecting in you if you don't believe you have any "pay-dirt" in your nature.

In the measure in which you under-estimate yourself, there will be that much of you that will never do anything. You have found that out a hundred times in trying to close a deal.

In the measure in which you over-estimate yourself in that measure you will be trying to fit yourself into places you cannot fill.

Confidence rests upon a true interpretation of your powers, neither under-estimated nor over-estimated.

Give yourself credit for all you are. Surprise those who thought you did not amount to anything.

The moment you stop believing in yourself your world passes into thin air. Boiste has stated it frankly: "He who has lost confidence can lose nothing more."

Your capacity and power are limited only by yourself.

When you put over that business deal it proved that you could do it. In that act you have the promise and prophecy of every deal you will ever close.

When you stop believing, you stop growing, and your ambitions fall into the dry rot of decay.

How much do you believe you can do even though appearances are against you?

How much do you believe you can do even though circumstances are against you?

How much do you believe you can do even though the active opposition of others is against you?

This is the test and measure of a true self-confidence.

SELF-QUIZ

1. Do I have a definite plan of analysis for the marketing of my product?
2. Do I equip my salesmen to cope with the objections and conditions in his territory?
3. Do I give my salesmen all the co-operation possible so he will be in a position to operate in his territory efficiently?
4. Do I know just what my problems are in marketing a new kind of product to the public?
5. Do I realize the difficulties to be overcome in changing the habits of the public when trying to introduce a new commodity?
6. Do I understand the value of advertising and know where and how to advertise my goods to the best advantage?

7. Do I know that an analysis of the market for one product may not be suitable for another?
8. Do I study the market in such a way as to be able to suggest to my customer ways and means for greater turn-over and profit?
9. Do I work some of my territory more intensively owing to conditions found through my analysis?
10. Do I keep a record of each year's business so as to be able to measure the efficiency of my methods and efforts toward increasing business?